The Lanna Pentalogy

Kit Tyabandha

God's Ayudhya's Defence

Ḅaṇgkauk

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To God.

Preface

Since before the year 2000 I had begun story of my life in bits and pieces. Whenever I talked to friends about my past experience, they seemed to be interested, and many said that I should put what I have just told them into a book.

But the compilation of these five volumes comprising what I call a pentalogy, had never been realised until 2003, and that was only that I wanted to test a writing system I had invented, which I call the Sanskrit-Pinyin-Tiyapan system. This is merely a one-to-one mapping between various different scripts and the roman alphabet, with invented tone and other symbols based on the Pinyin system and Romanisation of Sanskrit.

Kit Tyabandha, PhD
Manchester, England
Spring, 2006

A Lā̱nna̱ in Town

§

I think it is high time that I talk about my life. If I were to summarise my life into only one statement, I would divide it into six periods, namely the childhood, the sword school, the New Zealand, the engineering, the England, and the Japan periods.

I cannot remember anything much about my childhood period. I was born in Daiï in a town called Jiangmhă̱. That was back in November 1966. We lived in a busy street in the town. Close by is a market. In fact there are two markets, one on the opposite side of the road to the other.

My father is business man who used to own a business, a shop. He is a truly master of the house, back then even more so. He is a very responsible person who leads a virtuous life. His father had got more than one wife, to be precise three. At that time I think it was a matter of course that a man should have more than one wife. But this often led to much troubles, not unlike the way it would today if one has mistresses or is promiscuous. My father must have seen it all. This makes him understand all the bad points of polygamy and consequently he wisely stays away from it. He was a very bright student in his day who went to the Montfort College, which is a catholic school and a famous one in the country. He is not a Christian but a Buddhist, which is usually the case with most of the Daiïs and nearly all of the students at the college. I have two sisters and one brother, all elder than me; we all ended up going to, that is all come from, the same college that my father did.

My mother, on the other hand, has got a father who was only married to two wives. She is particularly proud of her lineage, that is to say, that her great-grandmother came from *Ayudhya̱* and her grand mother was also born there. Her grandmother must have led a very interesting life, who had been separated from her brother while still very young after their parents died. I do not know how their parents passed away, but her brother, that is the brother of my great-grandmother, is said to have been adopted by, and went away with, a performing troupe of the Chinese opera. So for the moment his trail ends there.

This grandmother of my mother, that is to say, my great-grandmother was born in 1878, nearly two centuries after the sack of *Ayudhya̱* her home city by the Burmese. Before that it was a city much admired by explorers and missionaries. The hyperbolic curves of pagodas there in those days rose elegantly up from the ground, surround the sumptuous inverted bell and then turns with style into a slender spire pointing towards the sky but neither reaching nor pretending to reach it. The serene beauty of the landscape and

the sincerity of the people there in those day were no exaggerated matters, and many a song has been sung by foreigners that lament its loss.

The history of *Ȧyudhyạ* begins when King *Ụ̆daung* (*Rạmạdhiḅḍị I*) founded the city in 1350 and ends with the second sack of the city by the Burmese in 1767. Daiï historians divide the *Ȧyudhyạ* Kingdom into four periods. During the first period, from the 14^{th} century to the beginning of the 16^{th} century, it expanded eastwards and northwards. In the second period, mid 16^{th} century, there were wars with Burma. The third period of the 17^{th} century saw the development of relationships with Europe while the fourth and last period, in the 18^{th} century, has a prosperous beginning but ends with the city fallen to Burma for the second time. The first time it was sacked by the same was in 1569. In other words the Burmese's attack came approximately every two centuries and they almost always succeeded. The first time they came was just before the first two century cycle, when *Ȧyudhyạ*'s heroine *Suriyọdaï* lost her life duelling on elephant's back with *Prạe* who was the king of the attacking country.

If one supposes this trend of two hundred year cycle to carry on uninterrupted from 1350 when *Ȧyudhyạ* was founded, through all turmoils to the present *Ratnȧkọsindṙ* period, then Daiï is now in its prosperous period between wars, despite the economic crisis that started with the dwindling in value of the Daiï currency Ḅạd in 1997. One would expect the country's prosperity, then, to reach its peak some time in the second half of the 21^{st} century. Hopefully that is, but who knows.

You never know what is going to happen to you really. My mother had menopause before she was forty, soon after she had given birth to me. Everybody says she had been lucky, even the doctors do. She was to develop osteoporosis later on, when she also broke her hip.

Now we know more about menopause and osteoporosis. One of the most effective way to deal with them is by using hormone replacement therapy where natural oestrogen is given orally through patches attached to the skin. With the hormone, the chance of developing cancer of the womb is higher, but not that of the breast or cervix. To counter this, some doctors will also give you progesterone.

The sex hormones oestrogen and progesterone are cyclically produced by the ovary, the pattern of which is triggered by other hormones from the pituitary gland. Together, these two hormones tailor the uterine lining to allow the fertilised egg to embed itself there. At menopause the ovary mysteriously loses its ability to produce them. The pituitary gland, seeing their absence, responds by making more gonadrotrophin and thus causing the hormonal imbalance which explains the distressing symptoms in women experiencing a menopause crisis.

A newly born baby girl has within her ovaries some hundred thousand of

ova. Of these, her ripening process of ovum formation will manage to use less than five hundred from puberty all through her adult life. Exploring the use of the remaining ova in stem-cell researches is still a controversial issue yet at the turn of this century. It depends on our definition of life itself.

I can remember little of my childhood. I remember when I had to go to school for the first time I fought like mad. I was particular good at kicking with the sole of my feet. This I did, and cried, when they tried to put me into the school uniform, that is father, mother, and *Lìam* who lived with us and helped with the shop as well as house chores. In 1973 most city folks in Jiangmhăị had servants. I must have caused the three of them much trouble with my kicking and crying. I cannot remember whether the uniform was torn.

In our house we have big beds which we share among us children. Three of us can easily fit into one such bed. As the youngest in the family I was quite aggressive, and I always kicked someone out of the bed, usually my brother. I never knew that I was kicking in my sleep because I always slept so sound. I only know that I always went to bed with a blanket on me and always woke up with the blanket on the floor. I used to wonder to myself who put it on the floor, and I used to be determined before going to sleep not to part with the blanket tonight, but it was no use, for next morning it would be gone again. Normally someone would come, I think it was my mother, either late at night or early in the morning when it was colder, picked the blanket up from the floor and put it back on me again. Then I might be able to keep it if I was lucky. Since I was born in a year of the horse, people decided that it was not unnatural that I did kick.

When we travelled together away from Jiangmhăị, we used to stay at hotels. We either stayed together in one room or had two rooms, one for the girls, the other for the boys. I usually found myself sharing a bed with my brother, and I often wondered why he was sleeping on the floor when I woke up in the morning. I think he must have decided it was more peaceful and safer to sleep on the floor instead of getting back on to the bed when I was still there. I seem to have rebelled for my personal space even before I was ten. Later when I was in my twenties I did a similar thing on the dance floor whenever I danced. Not that I had ever kicked anyone on the dance floor, but with a wide base and a footwork I did virtually create my personal domain on the ground. And no matter how crowded the place might be, I always found before long that I had enough room to do my Zulu dancing. I always find that people eye me differently after they see my dance. I do not know whether that is a good thing or not.

Our house is in fact three houses surrounding a courtyard, with a high wall completing its remaining side to make it resemble a quad. The wall must be a yard thick and three metre high. It has a huge wooden door in the centre which opens outwards at the middle. Because the wall is so massive the door

never leaves the inside of it even when fully opened. When it is shut there is a comfortable recess on the outside where the tricycle drivers take a rest or play chess, always parking their vehicles of trade such that they line the whole length of the wall. Inside the house two flights of wooden stairs leads up to the first floor where we sleep. I like to sit at its head and let myself slide down the steps. The stairs are rounded and smooth to touch. You can slide down it quite easily without hurting yourself.

The top of the stairs leads directly towards a room in which are kept mattresses. It has a large door which is normally left open. Whenever I have to turn off all the lights on the first floor before going to the ground floor I always run as fast as possible down the stairs, taking three steps at a time. It seems to me that something in the dark corner is going to chase after me if I do not bolt. I neither hesitate nor pause when darting down the stairs this way, and never look back. I feel like my heart would stop to beat if I did.

Darkness is by no means the only thing that I fear. The upper floor of our house is made of wooden boards which have shrunk, leaving gaps between them. These gaps are only half an inch deep. Dust gathers there, which bothers no one so long as the surface of the boards where one comes to touch is clean and inviting. From these narrow openings in the floor I imagine that hands of some spirit are going to come up and get hold of my ankles. So I try to place myself such that no parts of my body are directly on top of them. This preoccupation always keep me busy and silently worried.

In the middle room there is a tall stand on top of which are placed many Buddha figures and other things believed to be sacred. We pray for ten minutes each night, my mother leading. My father do not pray with us, but he also believes, or shall one say because he does so Buddha's teaching?

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My father must have been a very bright student in his day as one indeed, for still I studied with one of his teachers whom we call Brother Antonio, who always praised him highly. Often when he saw me he would say to me in Daiï, 'Do not fail us the high reputation of your father!' Brother Antonio taught me English. In Daiï we study in a class of more than fifty students, which is unimaginably large in the standard of western countries. Everyone studies the same subjects. This holds for all the six years of the primary school, the three years of the junior secondary school, as well as the remaining three years of the senior secondary school. Apart from English, he also taught us how to play a recorder, that piece of instrument which was the first one that I learnt. It was also him who taught us the school song in English. Although I think he is an Italian, he holds the highest authority in the English language at the primary school level. He is also rather knowledgeable in music, and he leads and runs the school brass and marching band. The school song I mentioned

is ever our favourite one the words of which I think he adapted himself from the song *Heart of Oak* written by David Garrick in 1759, while the melody probably comes from Dr William Boyce (1711–1779). This song is said to have numerous versions. Ours one is the following.

Come cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
The pride, more than all, to the Montfort 'tis dear.
Let us sing very loud. Let our colours be high.
For who can be 'proud as the sons of the Daiï.

Montfort boys, come along!
Let us sing our best song.
Our flag, red, white and blue,
to it we'll be true.

We fight and we conquer again and again,
When borne by the red, white and blue.
Our colours shall be hoisted on high,
When borne by the red, white and blue.

As a comparison, the following is the original version as written by David Garrick.

Come cheer up, my lad, 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year,
To honour we call you, not press you like slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

Heart of oak are our ships, jolly tars are our men,
We always are ready, steady, boys, steady,
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

We never see our foes but we wish them to stay,
They never see us but they wish us away,
If they run, why we follow, and run them ashore
And if they won't fight us, we cannot do more.

They swear they'll invade us, these terrible foes,
They frighten our women, our children and beaus,
But should their flat bottoms in darkness get o'er,
Still Britons they'll find to receive them on shore.

Our worthy forefathers, let's give them a cheer,
To climates unknown, did courageous steer.
Through oceans to deserts, for freedom they came,
And dying, bequeathed us their freedom and fame.

As the British navy was during the time that this song was written was the main support of the mighty British Empire this song must have had its day and a wonderful history, or shall we say a mixed one because no empires can come about without a war, and wars should not really be said to be wonderful.

However, the spirit of the song lives, and there is something artistic and wonderful within it which is carried over to the movie *Star Trek*, where it appears in the following form.

Come cheer up my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
To find something new in this wonderful year.
'Tis by honour we're bound, we're not pressed here like slaves,
And who are so free as the sons of the waves?
Heart of oak are our ships. Heart of oak are our men.
We always are ready–steady boy steady!
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again!

So much for the fighting spirit! In fact I think most people like the song because the melody is never high and the line is convenient for bellowing together. So Brother Antonio taught us this song as well as other things.

No Europeans can live in Daiï without the air conditioning and Brother Antonio is no exception. When I was young air conditioners were so rare that except for his office I can hardly remember having seen one anywhere. Even to this day most people of around my age or older still find it hard to feel at ease living in an air-conditioned room. It is a little different in office, where the working environment is invariably western and you move about all the time. But at home where you relax and do nothing conditioned air sometimes become a bit cold and too dry even for myself.

I remember at the annual festival of my school during my fifth year in the primary school, which was held during winter, in fact I think it was Christmas, I played a part on the stage in a little drama. The scene was nothing more than a conversational passage in English to show the ability of students on the subject. As I do not remember having any surprise about being picked to play the part, I guess that my English must have been somewhat above the average back then. I played a part of Peter who is reluctantly woken up by his wife, who was in actual fact a friend of mine whose name was Joe, who was a boy dressed up in a woman costume as my school is a boy's high school or simply boy's high as they call it in New Zealand. He was beautiful and cross dressing became him well at that time. Either just before or just after that school drama it must have been that our group generally led by him had become somewhat effeminate as I would have called it, which had lasted for about a year. Most of us, with perhaps only one exception, had grown out of it not long afterwards. Joe had grown out of his beautiful self

through a period with dimples into a handsome and transformed one, though a bit macho as of the last time that I saw him.

In that drama he wakes me up saying it is late and that I shall be late. I try first to insist that it is still dark and finally, when I really have to get up, come shivering out of bed asking, 'Is it cold outside?' Now I am sure his name in the play was Mary, but what is uncertain to me now is what he did to wake me up. I think it must have been by a bucket of water as the story goes. Not with real water of course, only imaginary, since it was in the middle of the winter and Jiangmhăị in winter can be very cool or quite cold even nowadays, more so back then, that I could have caught a cold or pneumonia if I was really poured on with water. The conversation was not live but recorded in the Brother Antonio's studio, that is his office. The sound effect of the water splashing was produced somehow or another, and as it was cold in his office I was already sufficiently shaking involuntarily from the air conditioning for the scene of shivering to have required only one take.

In my sixth year of the primary school I joined the school marching band where I played a second if not third trumpet. My sense of coordination must have been rather poor because I remember blasting wrong notes shamelessly all through most of the occasions that we were invited to march. A few of such occasions were in funeral processions. Another one I remember was I think at some sport event where the son of King Rama IX was present. And yet another one where the king himself came. But through all these concerts by the brass band of our renowned school I only remember waiting long hours to play only a few pieces where we were playing sitting down, or blasting away wrong notes in the heat when we were marching. Someone told me that people would never hear the wrong notes, but I doubt if that could be the case. The trouble with marching is that I could never memorise all the notes, and despite the fact that the part of the trumpet in a marching song can generally be squeezed into a single page of about six inches wide and five inches high there never seemed to be enough of such parts for the trumpet to go round that I always found myself without one. Anyhow, even when I could get my hand on a page or two of these songs I never seemed to know which song we were about to play next. Moreover, I always had a bad habit of leaving my part to play with that of the person next to me. When we sat down and play it was somewhat better because then I only played half of the music wrong, as we always sat in groups of the same instrument, so there would always be someone around who knew the order of the songs and, what is more important, who could always produce the essential music out of a hat. One such person I remember is *Tậem* who was one year my senior at the school. Joe also played in the band that year, but he played the second trumpet the same as I did while *Tậem* played the first trumpet. Another person is *Ệ́* who was in the same year as myself but who played the first trumpet, and together with *Tậem* shared a fame in particular for stamina.

When I started to learn how to play the trumpet, I had to learn how to

tense both sides of my lips to seal the gaps thereof, and to shape my lips in such a way that it can be squeezed and sealed on to the mouth piece of the instrument. The tip of the tongue acts like a cork of a bottle or a stop valve where the pent-up air held in your breath is suddenly released to produce a sound. First you would play with only the mouth piece until you get a feel of it, and after that you try it on a real trumpet. Thereafter it is only a matter of improving your techniques and building your repertoire, and then, '*presto!*', a musician.

The trouble is that the playing of the trumpet as I have just described not only sounds like spitting, but actually one is spitting one's saliva all the time into instruments which are never properly cleaned after use. Moreover as one among the smallest member of the band who was often late for a practice, which was nothing unusual considering that I had quite a few other interests at the time, I always found my instrument missing and had to take another, often an older and less becoming one. All the instruments of course belonged to the school and must be shared. But each of us was supposed to stick to only one instrument and to use it through out the whole term. In practice this was seldom the case. I have an inherited what is called the Glucose-6 Phosphate Dehydrogenase Deficiency syndrome, which makes me more susceptible to chronic bacterial infections, so at that time I often had troubles with my throat, and was often given antibiotics. One antibiotic called Tetracycline, which was given to me at an early age, has given me a lasting effect which results in the dark brown stain in my teeth and the weakening of my bones. I cannot remember what he looked like but have learnt that it was a physician whose name was *Pradhan* who had always prescribed me this antibiotics at the time when every doctor should have known this adverse effect on children of the medicine.

When I have finished my last year of the primary school we had to move to another campus half a kilometre from the one I had spent my earlier six years. I decided to quit playing the trumpet in the band for several reasons, one of which was that I did not want to walk the five hundred metres everyday to a rehearsal. Another reason was that I blamed the chronic throat problem I had on the mouthpieces and the trumpets which I thought were filthy.

Anyway I think there are other reasons. One of them is that I get bore with things quite easily. Also I had many other more interesting things to do. Traffic scout was one of them, then came the forest fire fighting training, and then the Siamese Weaponry Club. Also it was during the three years of the junior high school that I began to have an interest in astronomy and built my own telescopes.

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Every year there is a sports day when we do not have to study. The whole school is divided into four houses, each of a different colour. These are

blue, green, red and yellow. The four houses compete against one another in athletics and team sports. We make T-shirts and sell them to all members of our colour. These are worn on the sports-day. Those who do not play, cheer.

Sport is good for your health. But such sports mentioned called *kịĺạsị* (coloured sports) are so prevalent in Daiï that one seldom suspects it incubate and harbour colourism. I define this term *colourism* as being a segregation of society into different *colours* according to backgrounds, beliefs, and so on. This is a phenomenon unique to Daiïs where *sị* (colour) is used in this sense. As such, to *lèn sị* in Daiï means to practise colourism.

Secondary and vocational schools' students fight those *going* to schools different from their own, simply because their *sị*'s (colours) are different. Managements practise prejudice against recruiting graduates who are no alumni of universities of theirs. The problem is both fundamental and deep-rooted. As a recent example, in 2006 Bạngkauk was divided into two camps, namely the Buddhist nationalists with their red and yellow for one, and the royalist nationalists with their blue and red for the other. Both campaigned and counter-campaigned to no avail, for it was the military (another standing *colour* in the equation) who took the opportunity and took over. Thereby yellow became a representation of the reigning monarch, possibly because people then feared the army.

Today is such a sports-day, and Siddhi and I stroll up to the first floor of the clubs' building. The rooms here are old classrooms. Each room has a blackboard covering the whole of one of its walls. The floors are made of teak planks. Teaks are trees which give high quality timbers. The wood is soft with delicate texture which is easy to work. They are the only trees which termites never touch. They used to grow in plenty in the forests around *Jiangmhăị*, but now they have dwindled into a very sorry state.

Each of the rooms has two doors on one side, one at the front and the other at the rear. On the opposite side line the windows from one end to another. The windows on the first floor open on to the roof of a bicycle shed.

In one of these rooms we find one boy with a rattan cane in each hand, practising steps. He is smaller than us, and slender but strong. He keeps his body parallel to the line drawn from one of his foot to another. His feet are more than two shoulders apart. The steps he makes are in long strides, always making an angle of 45 degrees with the direction he is moving. Thus he is moving in a zigzag fashion, with his body 45 degrees with the direction he is heading.

The right hand lifted up above his head, the cane goes around his neck in half-circle and then comes obliquely down at the same time as his right foot leads in a full stride. Next his left hand and foot do a similar thing, and so on until he nearly reaches the far wall where the windows are. Then he steps back towards us, the rattan sticks in his hands now alternately in a position

to receive a blow from an imaginary enemy's sword. His back-stepping is also in a zigzag manner. When his right foot leads the retreat, the cane in his left hand would be in front to protect against a blow. In other words, he always faces the direction where the blow is coming; the cane in front firm and protective, the other hand, also holding a cane, close to the hip.

We watch him go forwards and backwards in this way five times or more before he notices us. When he steps, his knees are bent in a slightly squatting position. When he sees us, he straightens up to his full height; and he looks somewhat taller than his real height.

''Morning,' he greets us smiling while walking towards the door where we are.

''Morning,' I venture, 'Where did you learn that?'

'From the sword club,' he answers, briefly spins both canes in his hands, each in the opposite direction with the other, so naturally that they look a part of his and not threatening in any way considering he is doing this while talking with us.

'How can we apply if we wish to learn too?', I ask.

'If you want to learn,' then he smiles a most sincere smile and says, 'I will introduce you to Master.'

At our school we call all teachers with a prefix *master* to their names. But at our sword club if we say 'Master,' it can only mean one person, Master Siddhibaur our sword teacher. The name of our club is *Ancient Daiï Art of Fighting*, but it is a direct descendant of a sword school of Sïam, presumably from the time when its capital was *Ȧyudhyạ*. Among his peer our master is known as '*Pīak*'. He is a student of the late teacher *Ạrị* who came from the same school as, and is senior to, Smạn, another sword teacher. The latter founded a sword school in Bạngkauk that teaches the arts for a fee, which is now internationally renowned, while *Ạrị*, remaining a steadfast believe in teaching his students for free, moved north and founded another school in *Jiangmăị*. He named his school '*Śrị Ȧyudhyạ*,' while *Smạn* named his '*Buddhaiïsvarrģ*'.

Tọ introduces us to Master. During the first month we do nothing except walking up and down the depth of the club room. The feet must be very wide apart, back upright and the steps very long ones, always at 45 degrees with the forward direction, first to one side and then to the other.

The floor of the room is made of wooden planks which has shrunken so that there are wide gaps between them. But it is smooth and polished, from being rubbed under feet all this time I suppose. Here and there a nail sticks its head up because the hole it has been driven into becomes larger as the wood shrinks. It sometimes catches us in the foot. When this happens we know only one remedy, that is the tincture of iodine. Right from the beginning, I

have a fresh wound almost every week.

We perform at festivals and ceremonies, live on Channel 8 from its broadcasting theatre in *Laṃpaṇg,* at night in front of a monument of a *Lāṇnạ* heroine in *Laṃbụn* and at the annual Winter Festival in *Jiangmhăị.* We also go to church on Christmas. Sitting one night amidst knives and swords we learn the song 'We wish you a merry Christmas'. Master is a Christian and our school Montfort College Catholic. Our Brother André has fierce dogs. But stand we at the front gate to his house and sing the song together, to the sound of their chorus.

Then I happen to take the written exam for the American Field Service student exchange programme and pass. At the oral exam where one has to perform I do my sword dance (what else?), and after that become the only one from North Daiï chosen, or else the only one who chooses, to live for a year in New Zealand, which for this lot is actually only for ten months.

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My father has a book by Camilo Osias, a compilation of literary materials for the intermediate Filipino students, the 7$^{\text{th}}$ book of *The Philippine Readers.* The first thing in it is a poem written by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919) called *Solitude.* My father likes this poem very much and it becomes my favourite. I include it here because it has helped shape my thoughts from this stage on until much later.

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
  Weep and you weep alone;
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
  But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
  Sigh, it is lost on the air.
The echoes bound to joyful sound,
  But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
  Grieve, and they turn and go.
They want full measure of all your pleasure
  But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
  Be sad, and you lose them all.
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
  But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
  Fast, and the world goes by.

Succeed and give, it helps you live,
  But no man can help you die.
There is a room in the halls of pleasure
  For a large and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisle of pain.

Ella Wilcox is an American poet from Wisconsin. She was born in Johnstown Center. With this and the sword club is concluded my life up to this point.

New Zealand's year

Philip and Rob are both in the same sixth form class as mine. Both of them are also in the Mathematics and the Drawing classes. Philip has learnt some Maori. He is very helpful and always explain to me things that I do not know. He asks me what my name Kittisak means in Daiï. I tell him that it means good rumours or honour, and ask him in turn what would it be in Maori, of which he say s honour in Maori is *Honore*. I do not think the name sounds nice, so I never use it. I do not know whether he realises that my name *Nui* is also a Maori word, where it means *big*.

The spelling of Kittisak in Daiï is *Kittiśakd́xi* and Nui *Nhũï*. The former is a Sanskrit word. Perhaps you already know this because it contains the letter *ś*. The latter is indigenously a Daiï word, and this is not so difficult to see because, for one thing, it is monosyllabic, and for another it uses the tonal accent *ẹk*. *Tịyȧ* is the Chinese family name *Zhāng*, and is the *Daiï* rendering of how *Lạ̄nnạ* writes *Tiạ*. In other words it is how *Lạ̄nnạ* writes the word *Zhāng*. Finally, *Bandh* is the Pali *bandha* which means *binding*. It needs the knowledge of all the five languages to explain my name.

§

I have joined the Tramping Society of Ashburton. This is one of the best things that I have ever done while here in New Zealand. We have our meeting regularly at the Ashburton College. As I only live less than ten minutes from my school, no one needs to pick me up after the meeting no matter how late in the night it is. Once one member showed slides of his trip trekking the Himalayas.

I sometimes go along with the others to various places. We have come up Mount Hutt in a car to as far as Arthur's Pass where we stopped and spend a night, only to find out the following morning that we are trapped in the snow. The road to and from Arthur's Pass has been completely blocked, so I have an excuse of missing school on Monday.

Soon after we are awake, we all move into the sitting room where we spend the morning watching the snow through the windows which are large and run from the floor up to the ceiling which must be about five metre high. Several keas jump around outside. Keas are native birds of New Zealand. They look like large parrots. These ones come up to the windows and look at me without fear, even when I tap at the glass.

No beating about the bush, all Kiwis know what we like best are the bush and the beach. People go to the sea to swim and surf, even in South Island where the water is rather freezing. The best time is probably the holiday period between end of December and January. This is despite the fact that the currents can be strong and on occasions you may meet sharks. Drownings are by no means uncommon and surf life-saving is one among the major summer sports. With regard to the bush, there are no questions about that being our home. Take as an example, suppose you are visiting a relative and it is getting late and time to go home, the bush would be the only excuse you may use to leave for which you would be heading. Together these two, that is to say, the beach and the bush, breed sand-flies whenever they come into close proximity of each other.

At present we are in the bush all right. But it is still our *bush* if only because we are snug and warm in here, and happy. Things happening in the bush are, for example, walks, long tramps, mountaineering, deer shooting and skiing. Among these the first one is easy to do enough. The last one is hugely a great fun if you know how to do it, which I do not.

§

There is going to be an AFS event by our chapter at Christchurch and somehow *Òn* and I have managed to get in touch with each other and decided that we will give a Daiï performance together there. I also plan to perform the fire staffs again, and so have been busy making my equipments.

Each of the two staffs is about 160 cm long. I wind strips of cloths three inches wide around the poles 20 cm from both of their ends. Then I drive small nails in to fix the cloths and wind some wires around them to secure them in their place. The fuel is one part petrol and one part kerosene. With this I soak the clothed ends of the sticks. Basically the staffs are torches to be lit at both ends at the same time and then spin around and around.

The cultural night is held at a *marae* in Christchurch. A *marae* is a traditional hall for gatherings. This one is a part of a girl's high school. First the students entertain us with their performances. These they do very well, which start the evening off nicely. After they have finished it is our turn as their guests to perform something for them in return.

After the performances by Maori girls, the highlights of the evening seem

to be the Daiï boxing which I perform with *Òn* and the fire sticks which I do alone. I do a Daiï sabre dance first. Then comes the Moaï Daiï.

We do a slow dance first. *Òn* seems to have picked up his movements for this purpose from professional Daiï boxers, while I closely follow the practice of the Old Ayudhya in my school. After the ritualistic first part, the next part is exciting because we do a few minutes of mock fight. Here we include difficult moves which we remember from an advertisement on the television of one energising drink back home. When I kick *Òn* in his neck I make sure that my foot merely touches it and stops there. But as my foot goes up, I slap the palm of my hand against the side of my upper leg as they pass each other. That gives the kick a sound which raises a hushed cry from the audience and holds them with excitement thereafter.

Of course I win as usual. I always win in mock fights. Before that, *Òn* kicks me around first. I retreat while warding off his blows.

Then come the three old movements in sequence. I am the one who do them because I am from a sword school and so could pick them up more naturally. Being exhausted, I fight back bravely but weakly. I kick a high but faint kick under which *Òn* duck before coming up again. When he has done so, I have my back to him, but the momentum of my kick which has missed is still with me. So I spin around with this, and up comes my other leg in no time to greet poor *Òn*'s neck.

It is more difficult to control the force of this move in performances. I did not realised this, and I believe I have slightly hit his chin, because he complains to me afterwards.

That mock kick sends him back, and I follow. But he gathers himself up and kicks back professionally. But his kicks are less strong now, and they reach only my upper arms. So I could gather one of them in my arm, and in no time the elbow tip of my other arm flies towards his kneecap to dislocate it, then it goes up to cover my head against possible blows, and carries on further until it reaches his face. The last move comes not long after this, and is one of the most powerful and definitive move, even though it sounds fictitious to the ear.

With the sole of one of my feet I receive *Òn*'s kick in the upper part of his leg where it is closer to the fulcrum and therefore the momentum is less than if I were to do so the same kick at other points on his leg further away from him. I let the momentum of the blow send me off, only control the direction of it in such a way that I rise up briefly above his head. In other words, I push myself up using my other leg and ride with his kick up, like a surfer riding a wave, instead of being thus sent backwards and away. I reach the height of my ride, twist my body while coming down so that one of my legs meets *Òn* at his neck. The gravity and the momentum, both of which originated from him, help each other to send him sprawling and sleeping senseless on the

ground. Then I kneel down beside his body to pay homage to the dead, and he rises up and we bowed to the audience before walking off the stage amidst a thundering applause.

The highlight of the evening is still yet to come, and that proves to be my spinning torches. I begin by spinning one torch lit at both ends. This I spin firstly in front, then back and front alternately, and then behind my back with the centre of the spin gyrating up and down.

Then comes another move which starts from behind, gyrates up, then thrown forwards and spins there, and then thrown backwards and gyrates up again and so on.

In the following move the bottom end of the pole is being thrown to the front and then to the back alternately, so the spinning torch covers your head like an umbrella of fire. Then the umbrella becomes a more stylistic hat with a bigger circle behind the head and a smaller one in front of it. Then the torch sometimes spins down below both of my legs which jump and down one after the other whenever it does.

The moves of two poles, one in each hand, are the same as those of one pole except that only some of the latter are possible in the former. You can only spin with both hands those moves which do not require each of the poles to move from one hand to another, since this would otherwise amount to torch throwing not torch spinning. I am no torch thrower, only a torch spinner or revolver.

This torch gyrating business takes no more than ten minutes to perform, but always raises much excitement and interest. After I have finished, I find to my surprise that somebody has put a bucket filled with water at one side of the stage. But the thing is less dangerous than it looks. In my numerous performances there has never once been a problem with regard to fire, apart from that sometimes the t-shirt I was wearing was scorched.

After we have left the *marae*, we have a party. The atmosphere at the party is filled with sincereness and friendship. One man comes and introduce himself to me as Charlie while I am sitting and talking among my friends. He is very good mannered and sincere. He is a guest from another chapter, the Southerland Chapter. It surprises me and fills me with such pride that someone should wish to know me, a mere school boy.

Weeks after I am back in Ashburton, Charlie calls us from his home in Invercargill to ask whether I would like to join the walk at Milford Sound that he is organising for his AFS chapter. He says he has asked *Òn* and *Nāuï*, who said they are also coming. My dad and mum are quite proud at how I get to know good people through my performing ancient things.

§

The Milford Track proves to be simply amazing. It is a jungle where there is no snakes, let alone poisonous ones, and a forest that comes with no diseases. The track takes us a few days to walk. We travel by boat from Te Anau Downs to Glade House, walk up to the McKinnon Pass which is 3,681 feet above the sea level, and then down again the other side to the Sound, passing the Sutherland Falls along the way. We walk from 2nd to 5th December 1983.

We reach the mountain top where it is windy and the clouds are close by. I sit down to rest against the rucksack which I still have on my back and stretch out my legs. There are many keas flying around. One gets down to the ground, hops towards me and pecks a few times at my boots. I try to sit still while watching it all the while. It does not fear me. The peak where we are is so close to the sky and its home, that I have become a part of its surrounding.

My year in New Zealand, though as I said earlier only ten months, proves later to play an important part in shaping the way I think. At Ashburton College I had seen a computer for the first time, not to mention used it to boot, though it is true they were Apple computers. What are MacIntosh computers anyway if not a newer Apple?

My English teacher Mr Lonsdale has been a fabulous and wise teacher. His poetry-reading creates a world of its own. I am totally led away whenever he reads to us poems.

I never knew her name was Vicki. To us she is always the beautiful Miss Thorpe, our Music teacher. She teaches us how both Hindemith and Schoenberg have played a key part in shaping the twentieth century music, that they are quite different from each other, and how.

As for my Art History class, there is no questions whatever about it being important. Before this I had not really looked at a painting, or should I say that I had always looked at them but never actually saw?

§

During my first year at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University I play rugby in the B team of the Engineering Department. We practise quite hard. But when it comes to matches, each one lasts only ten minutes. I play without my glasses, and I wear no contact lenses, so I never see who is whom when I play. Our B team met the A team of Architecture one day, and I passed the ball to an opponent because he called out for it. In the end they did not win the match, which was extraordinary because they were the best while we must have been one of the worst. Obviously they were even more shocked and surprised by the incident.

Not only did I pass the ball to an opponent, but I also passed it forward; which rid me of any excuse I might have, because you never pass the ball

forward in rugby, not even to one of your own teammates. My left leg gets injured and it become a weak spot for the next three years. Some times my leg simply gives way. I decide that rugby is not for me, at least not as a player.

My first year results are among the worst possible. At Culạ, if you get less than 2.0 out of 4.0, but no lower than 1.5, you get an upper probation; and if lower than 1.5 a lower probation. My result for the first term this year is that of the lower probation. Because of this I have to stop most of my activities, but I still sing at *Vaḍhnạ* Church. We sing Handel's Messiah during Easter. I also sing at *Mảhạthãi* Church at Christmas. When to my dismay my result does not get better, I have to stop my singing too.

Still my study does not improve. I do not know how to study an Engineering subject. Engineering is the know-how, as opposed to the know-why of science. This means that so long as you know how to solve a problem, you do not care what the theory or the reason behind it is. You will never pass an exam by reading the theory. You have to play around with the problems. Once I realise this, I stay away from the theories and set myself working on the problems. This is much more fun, and you never fall asleep reading. I sit in front of a television, with a video on, while trying to solve the problems. I cannot solve the textbook problems listening to music. For some unexplained reason, music distracts my attention while visual images do not.

With an upper probation you get one point, and with the lower probation two. Points accumulate unless there is an interruption when you could get yourself out of the probation. When you have five points or more you are retired. I think the same is true whenever your result is less than 1.2. The first term is an exception where no points are given, otherwise I would have already been given two points then. I manage to get out of the probation in the second term, but thereafter receive one point every term for four.

At the end of the second term we choose our major. There are altogether fourteen majors to choose from, and each student ranks all of them in order of preference. Following the currently popular opinion I choose Electrical Engineering as number one and Mining Engineering number six. Because my study result is very poor, I become one of the eleven students who are assigned to the Mining Engineering Department. Among these, no one chooses Mining as his first choice. From this number only two graduate from this department; Bongśdhaur as a mining engineer, myself as a mineral engineer. The others change to some other departments.

I want to change to Electrical Engineering but cannot, so I take Electrical Engineering subjects without telling my advisor. I write all the registration forms myself and sign them with his signature. This is later found out, when I was stood in front of a committee and have to retake some of the subjects again. I am desperate because I always follow others and never make my own ideas and dreams different from theirs.

At the end of the third year every student have to gain a practical experience by working in a company. I want to find traineeships in the United Kingdom, for one thing because I want to be trained as an electrical engineer. If I practise close at home, or so I think, I would have to work in a mining company, which I do not want to. In my second year I go to the British Council and obtain addresses of some companies in U. K. This I show to Ben, who then picks up about five from among the twenty odd. We decide that I will write letters to them, but will show these to him first so that he can make some suggestions and corrections. Later on in our talk, however, he says that it would be quite unlikely that I will be able to get a place by applying this way. He writes down the name and address of Bill and says that I could write to him. He makes corrections after I have written the letter, and I send it to Bill. I also write to Peter about renting a room in his house.

Bill is Ben's brother-in-law, and Ben used to train Peter when he started his work at the same firm where he worked. Bill gives me a salary of one hundred pounds a week, half of which will go to Peter for the rent. In England, everyone seems to think that fifty pounds a week is rather expensive for a room. In Daiï the usual price that I pay is about ten pounds a month. We will see how the room is.

I know later that while I was writing my letter to Bill, Ben made a phone call to introduce myself to him so that he already knew me before receiving my letter. Such is the kindness of Ben.

I do not want to tell my parents that I am going to England for my engineering training because otherwise my father would surely insist on giving me some money. Little do I know how tight the situation they are currently in, for my father never lets us know or complains.

I sell my bicycle to *Baị* for 500 *ḅạd*s. That is only two per cent of the plane ticket to Heathrow. The rest of the money comes from my savings. But in fact the bicycle is what my father gave me, and I should not be selling it without letting him know first. Also, I sell it too cheaply, even though it is to a close friend. He never looks after it afterwards, and it is going to nearly break my heart when I see it again when I come back; flat-tyred, rusty, left around unchained and unlocked in a state of disuse. Lastly, the money in my saving account originally came from my father anyway.

I tell *Nhăung* over the phone that I have to get a hands-on experience this summer for my course at the university, that it may be out of town and I do not know whether it will be easy for me to get in touch over the next few months but there is no need to worry. Then I buy my ticket to go to London.

The night before I fly I stay at Ben's place. He lets me read *When the wind blows*, a story by Raymond Briggs about the aftermath of a nuclear war. It is a profound cartoon that leaves you thinking for a long time afterwards, and you will never forget you have read it. This is the summer of 1989. Who

would know that within six months the Iron Curtain will come down. No one would have an imagination to imagine such thing possible.

Ben teaches me the necessary manners; how you must wipe the tub or sink clean after you have finished with it. 'Shall I find myself an umbrella to take along with me?', I once asked him, to which he replied after some thought, 'No. That's not necessary.'

Later I learn that this is the case. Unless you have to be out and about all the time, or unless you always wait until the last minute to go to work, for instance, you hardly need an umbrella in England. Heavy rain in England is very rare, rain is unusual, but most of the time when the sun is not there it drizzles. And even when it drizzles, it usually does so on and off according to the patterns of the cloud above and the wind from the north west. This, I think, is the reason why people wore hats. It is funny to find oneself under an umbrella when it only drizzles on and off. A hat is more convenient, and a jacket absorbs water like a blotter absorbs ink. Moreover, when you are working from nine to five where does an umbrella come in?

'Have you any other suggestion?', I once asked Ben. He thought for a while and then said,'Yes. Don't talk too much at work!'

The following day Ben drives me to the airport. It takes us only one hour because it is not a weekday and we go by the express way. Since I have known Ben I no longer speak in a Kiwi accent. Several years from now Charlie is to say that my accent then is neutral when I express my regret of having lost it.

I fly Air Lanka because they gave me the best price. I drink beer and wine on the plane. The trip is about fifteen hours, so I get some sleep. I feel free again when I fly away from home; the same feeling that I used to feel six years ago when I flew to Christchurch. When you fly, you have so much time to relax and reflect. I would not like to fly with anyone. I wish not to have a long conversation for I prefer at such time the solitude.

§

I meet Bill for the first time at Heathrow Airport. We drive along M25 to his place where I am to stay this weekends. Then he drives me to Peter's place in Weybridge where I am going to stay for the rest of my job training.

There is another person whose name is Daniel who rents a room at Peter's place. He is a chemical engineer. He is a large, gentle man who wears glasses, which reminds me of the leading character in *War and Peace*.

When I am alone in my room for the first time, I lie down on the carpet and look up at the ceiling in that position for a long time. I think about many things. I think about the problems I always have in my study, about many expectations and as many disappointments that have been. I think about our sword school, about New Zealand, and about Ace.

Peter has a classical guitar and he let me use it whenever I want to. He has some music books, and from these I teach myself classical guitar. Often I sit alone in the drawing room at night and play to myself *My bonnie lies over the ocean.*

From the books on cooking that Peter always keeps on the mantelpiece I learn how to make the dough for pizza and the pizzas. My pizzas start off simple and yet become ever more simplified as time goes by. I mix flour with water and a little salt, and knead the mixture into a dough. In the end for the topping I merely use carrots, oil, and tomato sauce.

When he was a boy, Bill loved to play with model trains. His is not an exception of English kids. The railway was born and developed here. Recently the privatisation of the railway has somewhat damaged the fame and integrity of this service sector. There had been horrible crashes that showed irresponsibility.

§

Penmaenmawr is Welsh for 'big stone head'. It is the name of a small town in North Wales which lies between Conwy and Bangor. It is by the seaside and on the border of the Snowdonia national park. This weekends I come here according to the plan I have made since last week. I stay at the Penmaenmawr Youth Hostel which sits on a very strange location, that is on the beach. It is the sole house there on a piece of land that stretches between A55 and the sea. Ten years from now it will have already closed down, which is the more pity for it is in such an impressive location.

However, there are not many people staying and the place is quite empty, so I guess that's why it is not profitable. I wonder to myself why so few people come here. There are not many people who like coming to a small town like this. But I like this no less than I do Edinburgh. I also want to go to Inverness, but it is a bit too far away from Surrey where I live.

Snowdonia will be opened in a few weeks. It has been closed to the tourists since winter. You can see mountains in the distance. I only walk up to the top of the hill nearby where there is a stone wall, and look at the sea below.

§

Bill has arranged for me to get a job training for one week at a factory in Slough. He did so because I told him that I studied Control Systems. I do not dare tell him that as far as my university is concerned I am a student in Mineral Engineering; I study Control Systems without my supervisor's consent.

It is very kind of Bill because this company in Slough does the Programmable Logic Controllers and I have never seen one before. Also, I still get my salary for the week that I spend at the factory. Met helps find a place for me to stay there. It is a house of an Indian family.

Slough turns out to be a sombre, industrial town where the streets do not feel safe to walk along. You pop out, walk along quickly to go somewhere, and once there pop in again and feel relieved. When I see someone on the street, I often judge and keep the distance such that to make sure I can run away quicker than he can approach me. Except close to schools, that is, where there are then many people around and it is all right.

Not far away from Slough is the home of the richest woman on Earth, Queen Elizabeth II, Windsor Castle. If she is not here, you would probably find her at the Buckingham Palace or at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh.

Being trained with a manufacturer is something different. Here I am looked after by a young man who is only a few years older than me. Neither him or me seems to have that many things to do. He tries to find one thing or another for me to do, but it is never a real job. I learn how to draw a ladder diagram and how to programme the Programmable Logic Controller, and I come to realise the vast gap between the theory and the practice of Control Systems. On one hand the theory is purely mathematical and gets more and more abstract, while on the other the practice has always been, and mainly are, rules of thumbs, always the simplest technology that works.

My room is upstairs on the first floor with its casement window immediately above the front door. The house is a town house with neither garden in front nor behind. It is painted white. Entering the house there is a corridor straight ahead that leads to the kitchen. Behind the front door and to the right is a staircase which goes up to my room, and immediately next to it is a bathroom.

The family is lovable, quiet and considerate, which makes them seem out of place because the town looks rough and unrefined. There are husband, wife, two girls and one baby boy. The wife sees me cooking everyday, and one day she lets me try some Indian food, which is very nice. The house is small but tidy. The bathroom is clean, though there are sometimes knickers lying around, and I keep it that way whenever I use it.

I came here on Friday in the evening and began my training at the company on Monday. On Tuesday Daniel calls during the day. Over the phone he says that he is going to sail to Cherbourg with his father and one of his friends in his father's boat. He asks me whether I would like to join them. 'Of course, I would love to,' I says. So he arranges that they will pick me up on Friday afternoon after I finish my work.

We sail the whole night and it is very stormy even Daniel's dad becomes sea-sick. I take a few turns holding the steering wheel, feeling less knock-about when I do, before laying my head down in the bow and sleep until day

comes.

The sea is so rough and the wave so high that half of the time we cannot see the horizon. Our small sailing boat keeps tilting haphazardly this way and that.

When I wake up in the morning we are already docked at the bay in Cherbourg. It is a sunny day with gentle breezes but no more. The sea seems so calm I must have dreamt it all up the night before.

But even if all that had been a dream, I still think I have learnt from it how to behave in a rough sea when you are at the helm. You head in the shortest straight line possible for the next crest, one after another. Never ever shy from them and let them come to your side because that is the easiest way they can capsize you. Place your feet very wide apart when you stand, for it is a stabler position. With that and your hands on the steering wheel you could even sense the throw and the need of your ship through the touch. The best cure for nausea at sea is to put your head down so that it becomes one with the body of the mass. This is the same reason you never feel nauseated when you swim.

Towards the end of my stay in England I buy myself a golf set because, after all, I am going to become a businessman and have contacts all over the place.

Then I buy myself an InterRail ticket, don a nomad instinct and set off for ten days in Europe. I cross on the ferry to Amsterdam, and from there on to Belgium and Luxembourg.

In 1948 these three countries formed a group called the Benelux countries. In French, Hollande is a more populated part of Pays-Bas or the *low country*, the capital city of which is Amsterdam. The other name of Pays-Bas in French is Nederland and in English Netherland. People in Netherlands speak Dutch. In Belgium they speak Dutch, French and German. Thus Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot has a French touch to the way he says things. In Luxembourg, however, most people only speak French.

From here the train passes Frankfurt am Main, Stuttgart, Hamburg and then into Denmark. We come to an end terminal there at about midnight. It is cold on the street. The street lights shine through the fog giving the streets a blurred appearance. Not a soul in sight I walk along.

Luckily I find a lighted building which turns out to be a police station. The policeman lets me sleep on the bench there, and though in the morning there is some shaking of the head I am allowed to use the toilet. Feeling refreshed after a good sleep I board another train and cross over into Sweden.

After another dawn has arrived, I meet a man on the train who invites me to visit his hometown where his mother lives. It is a small, beautiful town overlooking a lake by the side of which his mother lives. She is a kind, elderly

lady, and for all I know does good job at baking cakes. But her son is quite keen to show me around, so we set off again soon. He shows me his farm houses, visit a friend of his who is tinkering with his sport car, and then we visit an opening ceremony of a small shop where a man plays a few quick tunes on his fiddle.

At a roadside restaurant we have some pizza and drink some beer. Then I board my train again. This time I should get off at a certain station and change to another train in order to cross over to Norway. But I have fallen asleep from the beer and the warmth inside the carriage. When I finally wake up I decide to go all the way to the end terminal. Once there I board another train to cross over to Norway via the *Otofel* line. It is a beautiful route and I am held in awe all the way through it. There is no connecting train to the south along the Norwegian coast, therefore I hitch my hike.

It is midnight when I stand on the road side, but the sun is still above the horizon. Some people are fitting the roof in the distance.

The first lift I get is a small truck with ample room in the front seats where I sit with the driver and his young son. 'No, I am not from China', I answer his question, then noticing that he seems disappointed I add, 'I am partly Chinese but have neither been to China nor the Tiananmen Square'. The Chinese authority has recently killed some students there.

Then I tell him where I am from and he says I must be poor. I say, 'Yes. And I am a student'. You are supposed to be poor anywhere when you are a student. That is why students in Europe and China alike will stand in front of a tank. When you are poor, educated and not starving, you tend to have your ideals.

My second lift is an elderly woman whom I gather to be 85. She vigorously explains to me that the five main fiords of the coast in this country were the five fingers of a god. The road is ever winding, with always bridges ahead and cliffs on your right. But she let go of the steering wheel, holds up her hand outstretched and with her other hand points out and names one by one the five fiords. I hold my breath and look ahead, expecting to find ourselves landing in odd places anytime. But her timing is amazingly precise and natural that she never even once miss a single turn, or else no one will ever hear about this in any case. To be on the safe side, however, I try to change the subject.

She would like to hear the national anthem of Daiï, so I sing for her. David, a professional tenor from England, once taught me how people of his trade project their voice across the *mask*, that is to say, their cheek-bone. My voice is therefore quite full, it fills up the interior of her car.

When I am through with my singing I ask her to sing the national song of Norway, which she does with a fine voice while I hum along half a beat behind her. We must have seemed to a stranger like two bosom friends indeed.

She says she can remember King Bhumibol when he visited Norway some

thirty years ago. She thought at that time, she says, that he was more attractive than her fellow countrymen.

The road we travel on comes to an end at a ferry terminal. Here we say goodbye to each other, when she insists on giving me some coins which I shall never have used.

I have to wait for a the ferry to cross over to the road on the opposite side. The raised cabin which overlooks the sea is made from pine wood. Into this I enter, walk across the room to the far end and there lie down on the clean floor to get some rest.

The whole room smells of fresh wood. The sun light enters through the front porch, door and windows at a slant angle and shed an orange light on the floor beautifully. The kind lady has already secured for me my next lift, which is to be with a couple who are also waiting to go across on the ferry with their station-wagon. They sit down beside me in the cabin, also absorbing the atmosphere.

From here back to France nothing much happens. I enter France at night in a TGV the sleeping cabin of which seems like what you expect in a scientific fiction or modern space craft. There are no seats. Passengers sleep three to each side, stacked up one on top of the other in an s-curve position and facing left and alternately right. Under your knees the *bed* curves up to support your legs and makes them remain at an angle. It is like a hole dug into the plastic wall such that it fits all the curves of your body, and arranged with respect to the remaining holes in such a way that it efficiently uses up all the space. There are no straight lines to be seen inside the cabin.

At Cherbourg I am told to go back to Paris for I have entered France without a visa. I do not argue but walk around the building, get into the passengers' waiting room through the side door and soon find myself on board the hovercraft, thinking to myself that I prefer the ferries for the noise that the former makes.

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When the summer of 1990 comes I become a trainee of AIESEC, Association Internationale des Étudiantes en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales, in Budapest. Ben seemed not to like the idea of my going to an Eastern Block country, but that was before the change-over. Hungary turned a democratic country half a year before I go there, and has done so due in great part to the efforts from people involved in the field of Economics.

Three AIESECers of the Budapest University of Economics greet on my arrival at the airport there. I have only finished the last one of my exams not a week ago and feel rather strange now that I am at the airport of the capital city of Hungary, the country which six months ago was still behind

the Iron Curtain. This is the first country of the Eastern Block to change over to democracy.

The atmosphere at the airport is ancient like nowhere else in Western Europe. It is neither dirty nor simply plain, nor is it colourful. It feels more industrial than sombre, which makes Budapest seems like a town even though it is a city.

And a very proud city it is too, because the first metro line in Europe is here. The trains which run on that line now live up to the expectation for their antiquity and must be a century old.

At the airport I met Szitzo, who is to be my advisor, one boy whose name is Thomas, and another girl. They hold up a placard which says 'Welcome to Budapest!', and which also has my name on it.

I feel a little funny. Not only because I had only finished my exams last week and had only one week to prepare myself to come here, but also because on the plane I had constantly drunk Bloody Mary, beer and wine. I had only slept on the plane, and now since it is already getting dark here in Budapest I will need to get more sleep soon. I feel like a busy businessman who has tight schedules going to various places across the globe.

Everyone except me has his seasonal ticket. I ask Thomas how much the ticket costs and give him the money to buy the ticket. It seems like he has never bought a single ticket this way before, and it takes him sometime to find out what to do, so I know now that people here always use a seasonal ticket. They are all so earnest and nice.

Thomas explains that Szitzo is to become my advisor, after which the latter keep by my side all the time and never stop looking at me. Her manner reminds me of a similar thing in Ritch, my host brother in New Zealand, except that here is a girl.

I have never seen any girl like her. She is not slim, but she is not ugly. In fact she looks quite cute in a way. She likes sucking her thumb and the knuckles on the back of her right hand have become dark all over because she constantly bites them. Rob calls her 'Tit-so' when she is not around. I was flabbergasted the first time I heard him say it, but that describes her well enough.

The metros criss-cross one above another underground. At one station the deepest line is 50 metres below the ground level. The escalator there is in one long stretch, and it is impressively long. The shaft is wide and spacious. You stand there with the breeze to and from the tunnel on your face, and talk with each other for five minutes before you are through it. There are several pairs of escalators, not only one.

Between 1962 and 1987 Hungary had developed its economic systems and private sector. In 1988 J. Kádár, who was installed by the Soviet, quitted from

his position as the head of the party. The country opened its border with Austria in May 1989. The party abandoned both Marxism and Leninism, revised its Constitution to open the way for a multi-party system, and in December 1990 changed the official name of the country to the Republic of Hungary.

Some months ago Budapest University of Economics was still called Karl Marx University. They changed the name after the change-over. Moreover, there used to be a huge statue of Karl Marx in the hall in front of the university. I never see it because it was already gone when I first came here. The base for the statue is still there. I can only judge the size of the statue with this and the height of the ceiling.

We live on the second floor of our flat and commute everyday with the ground floor in an old lift. You ought to be able to answer another person inside the lift in his language when he asks you which floor you need. Therefore the first thing I learn from my friends is how to count, that is in the usual pattern *egy, kettő, három, négy, öt, hat, hét, nyolc, kilenc and tíz*, from one to ten. From twenty to ninety in the interval of ten are *húsz, harminc, negyven, ötven, hatvan, hetven, nyolcvan and kilencven.* This makes twenty-one *huszonegy*, just to give the idea.

Of course, at the moment I only need *három.* When someone whom you do not know gives you a hassle on the street, you say, '*Nem tudom*', which means 'I don't know'. You say '*Köszönöm*' or '*Köszönöm szépen*' to thank.

When you meet someone whom you know, you say to him or her '*Jóreggelt*' or '*Jónapot*' depending whether or not it is morning, and then '*Hogy vagy?*' or '*Hogy van?*' for 'How are you?' Before drinking you say '*Egészségedre!*', which means 'Cheers!', and the word for 'Goodbye' is the beautiful '*Viszontlátásra*'. The easiest way to ask someone the direction if you have a map with you is to say 'Hol van a ...', and then point on the map the place you want to go. Hungarian is an interesting language. The fact that it is not an Indo-European language, and therefore different from other European languages in general, can be seen when you learn how 'spoon and fork' becomes *kanál és villa.*

Margrid arrives from Holland. She is tall, slim, good looking and fragile, which reminds me of Daphne, Peter's girl-friend. So now Tanya has a company in her room. Their room is divided from the bathroom by a storage room where there are shelves both in front of and behind you. I keep my empty rucksack on one of these shelves. All the boys sleep in the living room. I sleep on a big sofa. Rob and Timo sleep together on the large double bed made from another sofa.

Behind the bed is the kitchen. This has a long shape, with a door opens to the living room and to the front door. When I lie down, my feet point to the television and window while the back of my sofa rests against the room

where Margrid and Tanya sleep.

The Hungarians call their own language *Magyar* and their country *Magyarország* or *Magyar Népköztársaság*. The Hungarian language belongs to the Finno-Ugrian branch of the Uralic family, the other branch of the latter of which is Samoyed. It is closely related to the languages Vogul and Ostyak in western Siberia. It adopted the use of roman scripts in the eleventh century, before which period it used to be written in a script similar to Old Turkic runes.

Alfonso and his friend from England had been a trainee in Budapest last year, and they stayed with us when they came back to visit. After the traineeships here, he had gone back with his friend to England. There he stayed with him and his parents, and did some part-time jobs in a fast-food restaurant for several months. They planed to buy a ticket here to go to Asia on the Trans-Siberian train. He took us to visit his aunt–she might not be his real aunt, but only loved him as her nephew–and together they cooked a pasta dish for us. It tasted very nice and we loved it.

Once we all went to a Spanish party where the rhythm was four-four but people danced, I thought, like crabs walk. I did enjoy the dance and the drinks enormously.

People and beautiful girls kept coming and introduced themselves to me, and a few girls asked me to dance with them, which I did and held them in my arm and held their hands. But when the slow music ended and a quicker one came up I always found myself soon losing my girls because sooner or later I always created my own ground, and it is very difficult for anyone to come close to me when I am absorbed in my dancing. I think it was either because of my loneliness, my disappointment in, and uncertain feeling about my study, or my thought for Ace that I was releasing whenever I danced. I need neither music nor alcohol to dance, and the music needs neither be loud.

After we left the party and was walking down the hill, Alfonso told us that he had told the people at the party that I was a prince. I told him I thought I was lucky to have gotten away from the party in one piece. I could have been assassinated.

Budapest comprises three towns, namely Old Buda, Buda and Pest. Old Buda has Roman remains. You do not normally go there nowadays. The river Danube divides Buda on the right-hand side from Pest on the left. The two came together in 1872 to become Budapest, the administrative, commercial, industrial and intellectual centre in one.

Buda is on the hill and is the place where the city's élites live. Pest, on the other hand, can be industrial and very sombre. But it also has all the museums, opera houses and hotels. Buda was occupied by the Ottomans from 1541 to 1686 and became the capital of Hungary in 1867.

The many monuments in Budapest are baroque, neoclassic or a mixture of

both in style. Under the Party all the bourgeois names of streets were changed into Marxist's ones, old monuments pulled down and new ones erected. Now some of the former come back, new ones coined up and all the communist ones disappearing doubly-quickly.

There is a museum on the Buda side that is hidden underground, in what is a huge natural network of caves under the hill there, where you walk into an uninteresting, small dilapidated house and ten minutes later find yourself in another world, dumbfounded. There is a chamber in there where one can find all torturing instruments dated back to the time when men were no less barbarous than us. There are plenty of stalactites and stalagmites, and the caves are in tiers like floors in buildings.

There are cable cars that go a long way up the hill, passing some forests with lots of trees. You can also go up into the hills on trams along a winding route. Both these and the cable cars are an exciting experience. The latter because of the scenic view you see, the former because the route is hilly and difficult for trams. Everyday I have my lunch at the company canteen. You have to buy coupons in advance for the whole month, probably to make sure that you stay here until lunch. After lunch I am no longer needed and may come and go as I choose. Sometimes I go up the hill and there choose a nice spot among the trees in the forest to sit and look at the beautiful view. My monthly commuting pass is probably not valid for uses outside the city, but no one bothers to check and I can always say I am a new kid in town.

Thomas arrives in our flat one day from West Germany after our German friend Timo has left. He has his car with him, and one day we go together around the country when he does the driving and I am a co-pilot. At night we sleep in our car, usually parked in the countryside just off the road, and in the morning take a bath either in a lake or in the Danube.

From the window of our flat we can see below the overhead bare wires that carry the electricity that powers the bus. Depending on the weather condition, sometimes there are coronae around these wires. Once I saw two of these slowly, but beautifully advanced down the line in spirals like two dragons. That was in the evening, not raining, the sky was red and everything looked a dull yellow touch.

Tanya is a trainee from Australia who likes playing chess, but I never play with her. Instead, we all play twenty-questions together. In this game a cryptic clue is given and everyone tries to solve it by asking up to twenty questions. The person who tells the clue also knows the answer. He may answer each question by saying only 'Yes', 'No', or 'Irrelevant'. Because the twenty-question quota belongs to all players collectively, one needs to use it sparingly. Each game normally takes several days to play, by the end of which we either have solved it or have exhausted the quota without having found the answer. It is a social game, which makes it fun to play especially when someone has asked a question while others are away and they need to

be informed so that they would not ask the same question again. We have always to hold a conference where we exchange new such information.

For example there is a clue, 'A bell rang, a man died, a bell rang'. As usual the question is, 'What happened?'. In this case it turns out that a blind couple went to the beach. The husband swam out in the direction of a bell tower in a distance across the bay. At that moment the bell in the tower happened to be tolled, so he swam towards it and kept on swimming until he drowned, thinking it was his wife ringing the small bell she had in her hand so that he knew the direction.

In another problem two identical drinks were served to a pair of identical twins, who each drank one, but thereafter only one of them died. It had taken us several days but we still could not find out what the answer was. In the end we ran out our quota and hopelessly had to guess. It turns out that the drinks are really identical. There is a poison in the drink, of course, but it is inside the ice-cubes. One of the twins drained his drink in one go and the ice had no time to melt, therefore he survived. His twin, however, sipped his drink slowly and died.

Yet in another problem 'A man died. There is sawdust on the floor'. Perhaps you have already figured out the answer to this one just now, but let me reiterate it to you again anyhow. 'Of course,' you would say, 'that man was a midget whose job is to perform in a circus and the sawdust was there because his friends teased him one day by sneaking into his room while he was away and sawed a few inches off the legs of all his furniture'. When the poor midget returned, the effect this had on him was to make him think that he had grown taller. All his life he had always had this apprehension, that is to say, to grow and become fit for anything but being a midget. Thinking he shall certainly be sacked when this became known, he killed himself.

At the end of my stay I buy a train ticket to go to Prague, from where I will try to find my way to go to Warsaw to catch my LOT flight to Ḅaṇgkauk. At the railway station in Prague I met Tilo, an lawyer and antique dealer who comes from West Germany. The first night there I stay at the YMCA with a boy whom I met in the train. Tilo visits us in the morning and offers to give me a lift to Warsaw. He says he is going to show me around Western Europe. That suits me because I am nearly broke.

He shows me around Prague. Then we drive into East Germany where we pass a gorge with a magnificent view and see a factory where the Taban cars are stacked up on top of each other to form a pile that resembles a mountain. Taban is a local make of cars that are so small that when you sit in front one of your shoulders touches that of the driver while the other one the door.

We visit Dresden where the rubbles of the ruins since World War II are still left standing in piles like mountains one of which is that of the Frauenkirche. We hear Leonard Bernstein conducts at the end of which he receives a long

standing ovation. He dies in New York before New Year.

Then we drive along the Autobahn into Poland. There is a small town near Kraków with the name of Oświęcim, or Auschwitz in German. During World War II the Nazis put one concentration camp at Auschwitz, the Auschwitz-Birkenau. Between 1940 and 1945 one and a half million people perished there, among whom were one million Jews. Thomas Keneally wrote his *Schindler's Ark* in 1982, the story of a German industrialist, Oskar Schindler, who single-handedly saved and protected hundreds of Jews from death in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. But we are now here before Steven Spielberg makes it into the film *Schindler's List* and so not everyone knows in 1990 what happened in Auschwitz during the German occupation.

When we drive pass Auschwitz Tilo suddenly asks whether I have heard about the concentration camps. I answer that I have. When I was fourteen, I used to watch a documentary film where the Nazis made Jewish people dig a grave and then bury them alive. It filled me with horror.

'There were many concentration camps. Have you ever heard about the one at Auschwitz-Birkenau?', Tilo asks. 'No' is my answer. I only learn now that there were more than one concentration camp. One is already too many. Moreover, I never knew until now that there were such camps outside Germany. I only dreamt that the Nazis only hated Jews who lived in Germany and who spoke German. I would never have dreamt that they would hate those Jews who spoke Polish, for instance.

'You have to see this,' Tilo comments. With that command, he drives in at the front gate and parks his car at the car park in front which has scarcely five cars. There is a timber building close by, but we walk away from it towards another front gate which looks older and has two parallel half-circle bars on top with the writing which says,'Werk macht frei.' The car park is nearly empty. It is sunny with some cloud and there are gentle breezes.

Surrounding the camp are two layers of fences, very tall, with barb wires and perhaps electrified in the past I should say. Straight ahead the path is wide and smooth, which branches off to both sides in between rows of buildings which look like school or military buildings. The buildings have stairs of a couple of steps. We walk up the steps of one. The wooden planks make it seems like a school even more. The corridor is straight and long, again this is branched off into doors along both sides. There are black-and-white pictures hung on the walls of the corridor. The room to the right was an office of a doctor who did experiments of inexplicable sorts on the prisoners. There are portraits of young women who worked in his laboratory, and died there. The door to his office is locked.

To the left there is a door to another room. We pass through this door. It is spacious inside and with plenty of windows the room is well lit. There are

a few things on exhibition. One of these is a writing which says, 'Those who did this did not realise that we have to live with it all our lives.' It touches me so much that my eyes are filled with tears and I feel myself starting to weep. I bite my tongue until it hurts and the tears are now those of the pain I feel in my tongue. This always prevents me from giving myself away with my weeping otherwise.

But the worse still has to come. There are several glass partitions on the right where items are stored in piles. These glasses go up from floor to the roof. The space inside them is wider and deeper than it is tall, and therefore is enormous. In one of these are glasses frames. You have the feeling that these are carelessly put in there by shovels. In another there are combs. Yet in another there are shoes.

I can no longer speak now, and have to turn my head away from Tilo most of the time to prevent showing my tears. My tongue also starts to hurt like it is going to bleed. When we walk out the front gate and to the car, I am already changed. I am completely shocked and can hardly think about anything. I get into the front seat, put the seat-belt on, and sit there in a stiff posture. Tilo drives along the road and on to a motorway, but for half an hour I keep looking out of the side window. Tears are still in my eyes, but more than that my mind is utterly blank. Moreover, Tilo is a German and I feel for the moment that I hate all Germans. Thus I sit for half an hour or more before thoughts start to come back to my mind again.

Kraków is known in English as Cracow. We come here after our visit to the concentration camp. It was the capital of Poland from 1320 to 1596. The Cracow University, founded in 1364 by King Casimir the Great, is only second to the University of Prague as the oldest university in Central Europe. The Union of Poland and Lithuania was signed in 1385, then queen Jadwiga d'Anjou married Władysław Jagiełło and the city became the capital of the Jagiellonian empire which, apart from Polish land, includes Lithuania and Ruthenia. In 1400 Jagiełło renovated and reformed the university with the endowment from Jadwiga. The university's name was changed to Jagiellonian University. It was here that during the fifteenth century one of its graduates, Nicolaus Copernicus, developed his heliocentric theory.

We enter and walk around inside the university. We look at the old wooden desks and the beautiful stained-glasses that line the wall, which I feel deserve a better protection if only because the country is now opening up. There is a big quadrangle of a market place here in the middle of the city where thousands of people gather on many occasions, for example during the Corpus Christi procession and on the festival which marks the first day of spring. On one side of the courtyard stands the Cloth Hall with its long, covered walk way lined with beautiful arches. There is a watch tower where a soldier blows the trumpet beautifully to tell the time, the tune of which he always dutifully leaves unfinished, pretending to have been shot in the act by a stray bullet like

one predecessor of his whose death in such manner has created this tradition.

From Kraków we come next to Warsaw. Here we park our car on the road, only to find the window smashed, my rucksack stolen and with it all my belongings. It is during the FA Cup, so the police could not help us much. Anyhow, with the ridiculous inflation rate of 300–700 per cent this kind of thing happens so often that even without football to distract your attention you become used to it by and by.

I have lost perhaps three sets of slides, two books on Geometry written by a Hungarian mathematician, a beautiful handmade chess set, my diary together with the addresses of people I have met and such information it contains, a long bread knife which I used to brandish when hassled by a tramp during the trip that Thomas and I made together, pages cut from Magrid's old magazines and all my clothes except what I have on today. I always put my camera on the carpet on the floor, and it was still there when we found out what happened to the car. But all the slides I took with it are gone. I am completely disheartened and suddenly feel lonely for the first time since I arrived in Budapest three months ago.

For some time I cry to my heart's content. But in the end I console myself with the thought that we arrive in this world bringing nothing with us, and likewise when we leave this place we shall be able to take nothing away with us. So there is no use our wailing over material losses, since even our lives, which are the only thing of importance to us, we are sure one day to lose.

Afterwards we walk the street of Warsaw. In a sunny weather Tilo introduces me to a nice Polish girl he has just met. She studies at a university, majoring in English Literature. Talking with her puts my mind off the sadness of my loss. There is no use crying over spilled milk. Not long ago I would have argued that this is no mere milk. But the girl sitting opposite me now is so alive. For one thing, she does not realise what has just happened to my dear rucksack. In any case, life goes on no matter what happens to you.

A skinny man in greatcoat walks out from a shoe shop. He barely reach the nearest street corner when from inside the same shop two big men stalk him down in strides, flank and hold him by the shoulder, turn him gently around, open the lapels of the man's coat, extract a pair of shoes hidden there and then let go of him. It all seems more like normal proceedings rather than a thief caught.

Passing through the custom counter at the *Ðaunmuang* Airport in Ḅạngkauk an officer asks me, 'Things to declare?' 'No,' say I, 'this is all I have. I was robbed', showing him the small supermarket bag in my hand. He remains silent for half a second, taking my words in, then says with a compassionate tone, 'Go on!'

Back at the university proves nothing like getting into a pan. This is my last year for the first time here.

The results of the previous term that I receive from the Engineering faculty are very good this time, I am pleased when I see them. I am given a certificate of merit for having done above 3.5 for the term, my score is a little more than 3.6, so it is about as great a swing upward as the swing downward in the term before. What I am glad about it, however, is that even when there was a risk of being retired if I could not get out of the probation this time, I took no unrelated subjects in order to rescue myself as most people usually do even when they are in situations far less tight than mine.

Ace leaves me for one Japanese business man whose salary seems a fortune to me. This is to be the time when the Japanese yen is at it strongest point. The bubbles have not yet bursted and even if it had, I doubt whether it would have made any difference when you compare the currency with the Daiï *ḅạd*. The Daiï currency is still unwisely pegged with the United States dollar.

I try almost every possible way, and impossible ones too for that matter, to get Ace back, but it is obvious that she has already made up her mind. Ben says, 'Then she is not worthy of you, and it is the more better that she leaves you now.' I agree with him long after this, but now I nearly die for it.

I go to *Kọ̀* and *Ḅaị̀*'s room at the Dormitory I of Cúlạ and say that I need to talk to someone. *Kọ̀* says, 'Come back tomorrow. I have an exam tomorrow's afternoon, and I have not yet finished preparing for it.'

'Drop your exams for half an hour. I am going to die unless I talk with someone now,' I said.

'You can go with him, *Ḅaị̀*,' says *Kọ̀*

'Oh no, you cannot! I have a student to teach in five minutes,' *Ḅaị̀* says.

'But you can postpone it, can you not?', I ask him.

'Not this time. She will be here any minute. And we could not make it last week, and she has exams coming up. It's impossible for me to cancel today's lesson. If I do she will probably not talk to me again, and you know it is not easy to find students these days,' he said.

'I know you can do it. She will believe everything you say. All your students do,' I plead.

'Don't praise me! It won't work. Unless I keep my promise, none of my students will never believe what I say again,' then he continues, 'You go with him, *Kọ̀*! For Goodness' sake! You can see how Nui is dying, and you still worry about your exams. To hell with your 'A'! You are going to get it anyway. I know it's your favourite subject, Strength of Material!'

'OK! I will blame you, *Ḅaị̀*, if I don't get an 'A' this time,' he says, 'Let's go. Where shall we talk?' 'We can walk to the university and back, and talk along the way.'

So that is what we do while I tell him about everything I know, which

honestly speaking is not really much. At one point I could go on no further and have to sit down because I feel like fainting, my eyes are going black. As I still see black everywhere having already sat down, I next lie down on my back right there on the footpath. It must be a sight to see, *Kọ̀* squatting down listening to me lying on my back, both oblivious of passersby on their way to the bus stop not ten metres away.

All covered in cold sweats I cry like a baby. After a while I already feel better, a crisis has just passed and I feel I have changed as well as exhausted, so we walk back quite early and *Kọ̀* gets an 'A' in his exam as *Ḅaị̀* said.

I go to the practising room where the Judo team practise for the Olympics. Having never done any Judo before except a bit of rollings I practise with them. Not all of those who are here are going to the Olympics. I am in the white belt, the lowest on the rung, while the man she has chosen is in the black belt, the highest. He is doing and discussing moves with members of the team. Ace is mad with me for being there and our relationship is as hopeless as ever but, since it could not have been worse, I no longer care about her disapproval; I am desperate now.

After the practice I follow them in my car to where she lives with her grandmother. They stopped to eat something at a restaurant close to the place and I wait in my car for over one hour before deciding to go back to my apartment since they still have not come out.

A few days later I ambush her while she is on her way to practise. She reprimands me severely for what I have done. I say nothing but plead. We go to an open restaurant in the market where we used to go several times before. We order beers and Ace drinks like a camel before going to her practice. She comes fourth in the Olympics. It must have been my fault and the beer, but I no longer care. I despise her now for having made me suffer.

> Red as the roses of the May time that bloom in bright array,
> love in my heart is deeming and drives my tears away.
>
> Alone it grew in secret, it knew no dark nor light.
> A phantom flower that never can fade in mortal sight.
>
> And though the Winter rages, my rose is lovelier yet.

Then one day I walked into an office building in Sị̀lom and became a life insurance agent for the American Insurance Association. Here I work in the Cakrvạ̀l Unit and our subgroup is headed by Sinịnạ̀ṭ.

The training for the agents is so intense it seems like brain-washing. You talk about all prospects of relationship with clients, but always the objective is to sell a policy. For this we have conferences, seminars and camps. Whatever

the virtues of risk-management are, the Americans have managed to make us a hideous band.

I have managed to sell some policies, most of the time to people whom I already know. Only once or twice do I sell them to a complete stranger. To all my clients I feel very guilty after I have quitted being an agent. But insurance had looked so sound and promising to me before when I was in Europe. I probably shall never understand how the Americans manage to turn it into a discompassionate business.

There are examples of similar things in other fields, for example when the Internet was created in the U.S. it was for a military purpose, that is to counter the possible attack on centres of command. Then came a European who turned it into a benefit for all by creating the World Wide Web browser.

§

I now work at Loxley in Bạngkauk under *Bụñśakdi̇.* With the standing monthly salary of 10,000 *bạd*s, I am a sales engineer who sells the circuit breakers of Unilec. Loxley is a trading company which used to be half owned by some Englishman many years ago, but which is now totally in the hand of the *Làṃzaṃ* family. The only person in the board of director now who is not Daiï is Ronald James Savage who comes from Singapore, and who is to be my boss for a year later on in my career.

One of the first projects that I have been assigned is the Residential Condominium project of the *Muangdaung Dhạnị* residential development project in the northern part of Bạngkauk. The ground of the project lies between the *Càobrayạ* river and the *Vibhạvdị*–Rangsit Road which leads to the Ó aunmuang Airport. Though the amount of sale is small at this stage, it is crucial for a great many future prospects of sales to come. If it is successful, there will be no doubt that we will be able to supply more of similar things to them in the future.

There are many parties involved in a big engineering project like this. There are the owner, architects, engineering consultants, contractors, suppliers, and sub-contractors. We are the one but last party on the list, a supplier. We try to sell our products to a sub-contractor, with one hope in mind that we will be able to do more business directly with the contractors after this.

I know how to read some French, and since Unilec is a French product and all parties involved, except the owner and some suppliers, are French, I have been assigned to look after the project.

I do not remember having spoken a single French word in my whole career selling Unilec. But my boss unnecessarily feels himself quite dependent on me. He used to bring me along to meetings even when there was no need for me to be there and it is good that he did, because sometimes I could pick

up what our prospective customers said among themselves in French in our presence and tell him afterwards what they really think, and this is useful for us to know.

Loxley had never been successful before in previous projects with *Muang-daung Dhạnị*, and I became the first sales engineer in the company to sell circuit breakers to the project. Even though ours are also French products, previous projects tend to buy only from Melin Gelin, for instance, which is also a French product. After my first success two more senior sales who are engineers, and that means everybody, have been assigned to help me with trying to secure future sales with the project.

We make a perfect team and mine is the easiest of all the jobs, essentially to talk with the customers. At about this time I decide that I want to go back to the university to study for another degree in Electrical Engineering. At *Culạ* you can do this without having to take another entrance exam if you are already a graduate from the Engineering Department there.

My boss agrees to let me come and go between the university and the company as I wish since I am the only one there who could really coordinate with the customers. It is understanding some cultural background of your customers which makes you understand them as a person. My knowledge of the French language, for example, makes me understand the accent of French people when they speak English.

The two engineers who help me are *Vanjaï* whose technical expertise is excellent, who looks after all the technical part, and Kēk whose standing job is to entertain, which explains why his eyes are often red from drinking with customers the previous night.

One morning I arrive at the company, after having attended my morning class at the university, to find the whole office unusually quiet. I ask a colleague who sit working at a computer in the computer room how things are going and she said, 'The big boss has been in a bad mood all morning. You'd better ask him yourself what's the matter because he had asked for you several times.'

I knock on the door of his office, enter, and say 'Good morning!' to him and ask him how everything is going, 'I have heard from *Ḍubḍphạ* that you have asked for me a few times.'

'Where have you been,' he said, 'the westerners called and we don't know what they want. There's no one here to talk with them, so they hung up. They had probably got mad at us. You'd better call them back to find out what they want.'

I said, 'I just come back from the university. You have my studying timetable. Don't worry, I am going to call them straight away.'

I leave his office for my desk and make my call. A French engineer at the

sub-contractor had wanted to find out one small technical value of our low-voltage circuit breaker, which does not appear in the technical manual that we gave him. I do not know, and so have to ask Biar who is an experienced salesman though not an engineer. He readily looks it up for me within thirty seconds, and I tell the engineer the value over the phone, for which he gives me many thanks.

Soon after this we are all laughing and Biar says, 'Why didn't he say so if that's what he wanted?' Over the phone the boss couldn't understand the poor engineer, so he asked everyone around for someone to help and got frustrated when no one there was able to come to his rescue. Also laughing I smile inside. Everyone here has probably learnt and know all the English grammar, yet there was no one who could answer a simple question a customer asked in English over the phone.

Vanjaï is knowledgeable in many things, not only in technical knowledge. He tells us about the two barbarous *imperial* dishes in China which he calls the Bear Paw and the Ape Brain.

For the former, people would cut off both paws of a big bear whom they have trapped in the forest. These paws they cook, hairs and all, which become an extremely dainty dish while the bear they set free who, left to fend for itself without the paws, would soon afterwards die.

The latter dish, the Ape Brain, is where a monkey, tied to a chair and placed beside the table, has his skull cut all around by a saw and lifted off. The brain of this half-brother of ours is then eaten while the owner is still alive, move about, and look at you in the eyes.

Every time I think of it I feel a chill running down my spine. I have heard that these have been shown in documentary programmes on the television, and that they have set animal-rights groups the world over running about mad, as they should.

Security Officer

I start applying for a new job after I have resigned from Loxley. I come to TelecomAsia one day to write an application form. The Human Resource department sends me to Suri for an interview. He asks me a few general questions. It is more like a casual conversation than an interview until he says, 'OK! Now I will ask you a question and I want you to think carefully before giving me an answer.'

'Suppose that it is your responsible to control the access to a mainframe computer here. There are operators who work in shifts. Each operator does exactly the same tasks as the others. Would you, one, assign one username and password for all operators or, two, assign a separate username and password for each of them?'

I think for a while and then say that I would choose the second choice. 'Why?', says Suṛi, 'Your answer is correct. But what makes you choose the second-, rather than the first choice?'

'A username is like a person,' I say, 'You need to be able to tell who does what to be able to say who is responsible for which action.'

The company has me trained to become a security officer. My position says a 'System Analyst', but I hardly write any Job Control Language code though I have learnt that here too.

A security officer looks after the security of computer systems and files. His is no autonomous jobs, but he is to a certain degree independent in his job from the peck and call of his boss. For one thing, he himself decides how much access his own boss should have of the systems he looks after.

As the first security officer of the company I have to design all the procedures. Training is often and intense. At home, in our company, I am surrounded by teachers. There are Bob who has been a security officer for no less than fifteen years, John who has been a system programmer for the past ten years or so and Somḅụrṇ, a Daiï who also works for Computer Associates who, like Bob, also specialise in security systems. There are at least five systems programmers, but only John to teach them; I am the only security staff of the company and both Somḅụrṇ and Bob are here mainly to teach me.

There is also training away from the company, that is at premises of the various manufacturers and providers. For these I go to Anderson Consulting on Vibhạvḍ̀ị–Rangsit Road and IBM on Bảholyọdhin Road. Our company is in a large building called the 'Fortune Tower'.

'A Fortune Tower but no Fortune Town's', or vice versa I used to think to myself. It is on the Rajḍ́ạbhiṣẹk Road at the crossroad where Channel 9 is. Still neither the Rama IX Road, the BTS Sky Train, nor the *Ḍaunmuang* Tollway is here. The traffic of this city has been at its worst for a decade. We are seeing things approaching their percolative point before all the crises come in a few year's time, in 1997, like the last straw that breaks the camel's back some would say.

The term *hacker* started at MIT in the early 1960s and had a meaning similar to *expert*. Later the term came to mean *someone who hacks*, and from then on became inseparable from another term, *freak* or specifically *phone freak*, because you usually have to freak before you hack.

John Draper, aka Captain Crunch, blew a whistle that came inside a cereal box into telephones to make free long-distance call. The whistle produced the 2,600Hz tone needed to fool the phone system. In the early 1980s FBI arrested hackers for breaking into many organisations. The Legion of Doom was formed in the U.S. and the Chaos Computer Club in Germany. The Hacker Quarterly 2600 is founded to share tips on phone and computer hacking. Kevin Mitnick monitors email between MCI and Digital Equipment in

late 1980s. First National Bank of Chicago became the victim of a $70 million computer crime. A raid was on for Fry Guy in Indiana, while in Atlanta Legion of Doom hackers Prophet, Leftist and Urvile were raided. Hackers broke into the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Air Force, CIA, NASA, *etc.*

In 1995 a British journalist gets together with some English hackers in a small hotel. They hack into the computer systems of MI5 and manage to pass themselves as the prime minister John Major, and he publishes an article in a newspaper to let the world know about it.

I have always wanted to work for a while in an engineering position. Being a security officer is all right, but once all the procedures are in place the job becomes routine, especially so when the systems you look after are mainframes. Because the company would not hear about transferring me to an engineering position, I decide to find a new job. Before I go I teach and train two new security officers to take my place. Both go on to become managers and work for the Security Section for a long time.

Many system programmers want to take over the security aspect of the systems because for one thing it makes their life easier. But easier is only what it seems to inexperienced managers. Most managements, however, know that the idea is imbecility, as preposterous it seems as having as an auditor the accountant.

§

I worked for the company called Jasmine as an electrical engineer. I started my work here about the same time that I moved into the new house which my father bought. It was in the northern part of Ḅaṇgkauk, straight up north from the Royal Palace. But the northern part of Ḅaṇgkauk with respect to the centre of gravity of the city is much further east to where we are, since the city is shaped like a fan opening out towards the east.

I still loved *Mhăem*, but I did not know why I never invited her over to my new place when I first moved there. She found herself a new lover in these first few months and I was utterly heart broken when I found it out. I thought I would never have been this way again, but I was wrong.

I had been making my own furniture almost every day since I first moved into our new place. I made blocks, to be tiered up one on top of each other and used as bookcases. I made about ten of these and painted them white. It must have taken me at least a month before I finished the last one of them. I made them in the morning before I went to work. I bought a small electric saw which I used for cutting the ply woods. The saw proved too loud, so I bought ear plugs. When I was done with the bookcases, I started on an easy chair. I always worked on these DIY's for about half an hour each morning. I must have disturbed my neighbours every morning with the sound of my electric saw.

Meanwhile, I learnt Chinese at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University in the evening, three days a week. It had been very difficult to drive into the city to the class from work, because of the traffic. Even if I left the office early, it still took me more than one hour to get there. Very often I was late. But even when I was held in a stand-still traffic, and I knew I would not be able to make it to the class, I still persevered along. Never once did I turn around and gave up. Sometimes I reached the university after the class had already finished. This kind of *idée fixe* is at times good, but most often bad. It keeps you running around all the time, leaving no time for yourself or to reflect.

My father always wake up at five o'clock in the morning. I do not know how he manages it without an alarm clock. Sometimes my internal clock works with precision and I find myself waking up at six or seven o'clock as I have planned, but most of the time it does not. Anyway, I can never manage to wake up at five in the morning.

One morning when he happened to be in Bạngkauk he said to me as I was about to get into the car to go to work, 'When are you going to get married?' I said, 'I don't know whom I could get married to,' and felt like crying. Since *Mhăem* left me I still had not recovered from my sadness. That much my father knew, I did not know why he asked me the question.

'Then why don't you go to England now to study?' He knew I had been accepted by a few universities there but did not have enough money. 'I've got some money that I was going to give to you when you get married,' he said, 'but if you are not going to get married to anyone soon, you can use the money for your study.' Less than one month after he said this, I had secured the visa, plane ticket, and study leave without pay from the company.

§

The computer centre at the University of Manchester is not just a university computer centre. It controls among other things all the consensus data for the middle part of England. Manchester must be very familiar with computers, since Alan Turing lived and discovered his Turing Machine here. The first stored programme computer, the *Baby*, was developed by Manchester University in 1948. Turing Machine has become the model for all machines with a central processing unit, while the Baby the model for modern computers which use software.

John Owens wanted to leave his money to his friend, George Faulkner, but the latter persuaded him to use it for the benefit of others, so he left £96,654 which started off the Owens College in March 1851. The college was then in the house of Richard Cobden on Quay Street off Deansgate. At that time Frederick Engels lived at the Whitworth Park and Karl Marx often visited him. During its first twenty years the College had always been criticised by the media. The university moved to Oxford Road in 1873. Then the Sunday

Review said, 'Anyone educated in Manchester would certainly be dull and probably vicious!' In 1903 it received Royal Charter and became the Victoria University of Manchester. Ernest Rutherford came here in 1907, received his Nobel Prize in 1908, and later moved to Cambridge. After the war, Sir Bernard Lovell pioneered the first large scale radio telescope at Jodrell Bank observatory. Freddie Williams and Tom Kilburn developed in 1948 *The Baby*, the first modern computer. Queen Elizabeth visited the campus on its centenary celebration. Fifty years later her daughter, aka Queen Elizabeth II, opens the new Manchester Aquatics Centre on Oxford Road.

To some, Manchester is known not for inventions but for the river Mersey that runs through it, and yet to others for its university, museums and a 15^{th} century cathedral. However, this is in 1995 and the city is at its trough. In a way this city is the capital city of the British Labour while London is both the actual capital of the country and home to the Conservative Britain. You can almost see the parallel by seeing how we have the Greater Manchester similarly to London the Greater London. Therefore it is no surprise that under a Conservative Britain the city should be forgotten. Everything shrinks away from its surrounding towards its own centre of safety. Dangerous back-streets crop up and multiply in number, and with them the number of things you have access to decreases. Things go from bad to worse and Moss Side becomes ridiculously dangerous. I passed it one morning on the outer rim and it seemed to me like a stronghold.

Since 1972 the library of the University of Manchester has merged with the John Rylands Library which was founded in the late 19^{th} century by Mrs Enriqueta Rylands as a public library. The new library is now called the John Rylands Library. The library has three premises; the original one at Deansgate, the one at the university on Oxford Road, and the Labour History Archive and Study Centre, located at the National Museum of Labour, which holds the archives of the Labour Party and the Communist Party of the UK. I only use the one at the university. It is so big that I used to lose my way in it. There is hardly any book I want that is not there. It is strange that this quiet town has such a large library.

The John Rylands Library on Deansgate was built between 1890 and 1899. It was designed by Basil Champneys.

Conservation is a controversial issue. The safest rule of thumb is I think to follow no opinions of your own whatsoever once you have decided to preserve something, or else never call your work conservation but some other names, for instance renovation.

In this case Champneys changed the plan of his building's roof to make it incombustible according to the wish of Lady Rylands. In 2001 some want to rebuild the roof to be in accord with the original plan proposed by the architect, which of course never have physically existed. With the architect and all the concerned party being already dead, I think, all conservation works

should only follow what have existed when the building was completed and existed for the first time. In other words, Conjectures are no conservation.

When money nearly runs out, I start working in Daiï restaurants and perform Daiï swords and Blaung Fai for their owners who are active organising Daiï Boxing tournaments.

I am called 'Master Kit', but live poorly because I would not teach for money and I must set aside some of what I earn for my future study.

But with the help of Amanda, *Vuḍhijaï* and *Mạnob* I find a scholarship for doing a post-master research in Japan. By this time I have been living in the restaurant for a few months already. One day I walk away and for a while become homeless. A week afterwards I submit my master degree dissertation, and a few days after that board a JAL flight for Japan.

§

I went to Japan in 1995 right after having finished my M.Sc. dissertation at University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, UMIST. One day I saw on a notice board, I think at the Control System Centre (CSC), that the Japan government was going to give a few scholarship for students from UK to do PhD in Japan. Accordingly I attended the meeting held by the Japan Office at the university. There Amanda gave a briefing. Afterwards she gave me an application form.

I needed to be accepted by a university teacher over there first because Monbushou, the Department of Education, would only give the money but not the place. I remembered Òan of the Engineer'73 class so I emailed him to ask whether he could help me find a teacher or give some suggestion. He duly replied that his supervisor had only recently had a few new students, and that he would not be looking for more this year. He then gave me the email address of *Ḥūï* and suggested that I wrote to him.

Ḥūï was also of the Engineer'73, and the best in his class, which means that he finished his degree with the gold medal, first honour distinction. He is best all around. When I wrote to him he said a similar thing to Òan's, but he also said that he would ask Jim for me. Jim is about four years my senior while *Ḥūï* and Òan was three years my junior.

When I talked to Suchin about Jim, he said he knew him. Suchin is one year Jim's senior while Jim and *Vajrábongṣ*, my first degree supervisor, are from the same class. What a small world for us Cuĺạ graduates!

Jim's supervisor was Furuta. He is a professor at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, the same as Hui's supervisor, Nakano. Nakano was the head of the Control System Department. Furuta used to be in that department, and they are good friends. But when I arrived, he had just formed a new department of his own called the Department of Mechanical and Environmental

Informatics. I think this was only a strategic move in order to get more funding from the university or the government. The word 'environmental' had suddenly become a fad in Japan as it had elsewhere.

With Jim's help I was accepted by Furuta. Everybody says that he speaks like a Japanese, and he was the assistance, *kyoshu*, to Furuta. Once accepted by a teacher, the rest was easy with Monbusho. It was Jim who wrote a recommendation letter from his supervisor to Monbusho on my behalf.

There are two ways in which an overseas student can obtain a Monbusho scholarship. You either pass an exam or you are recommended by a professor there. The competition for the scholarship was so fierce in Daiï that I would have been excluded right at the beginning from my low average grade final result, which means that I would not even have been able to apply let alone take the exam.

In Manchester then this was totally different. Either I was the only one, or there was only another person who applied to go to Japan that year. I had been worried about how to find means to fund myself through a PhD study, so you could well imagine that when there was this opportunity coming up I did my best trying to get it.

I did all the correspondences by email. Amanda sent the application forms and all the document for me by DHL, which I know must have costed the office a fortune because I had used the service before when I worked at Loxley. She also made telephone calls to Japan a few times for me, and I had talked with *Ḥūï* a few times. This is when I heard for the first time the phrase 'Moshi moshi!' that is used for the first 'Hullo!' when calling someone on the phone. In Daiï this, from the latter above, is 'Halhọ́' while in Chinese it is 'Wéi!'.

I would not have been able to go to Japan if it were not for what Amanda had done for me. I would have considered it an unwise thing to do if I had to squander the meagre fund, about five hundred pounds, that I had been saving for the cost of a possible PhD study at UMIST. When I told her that I had been doing some volunteer works for the Community Action (CA), she said so had she when she was a student. She told me that a Japanese student asked her to marry him because he wanted to live in the UK, and she decided to decline.

I will never ask a woman to marry me in order that I could stay in a country. I could have asked Amanda the same question she had been asked, because I like her. I do not think I would have dared, and I do not know whether she would have said 'No', or worse, whether she would have despised me if I had.

For another reason I nearly decided to pull out half way through the process of application. My general physician, Dr Sree, told me there's a ten pound fee for the chest x-ray and the health certificate. I thought ten pounds was a lot of money, considering that it was only for the application and that they had not yet told me that I could go to Japan should I prove to be in a good

condition.

When Dr Sree told me this, I said I would like to have my chest x-rayed anyway, if only because I smoked. But Dr Sree said, 'It would make no difference. You would need to pay ten pounds for the x-ray anyway because it is for a personal use, not as a part of a diagnostic procedure.'

Kit: I need a routine check-up anyway, especially because I smoke.

Dr Sree: That would not make any difference. A routine check-up is not included under your exemption. Your NHS certificate only covers the prescriptions.

Kit: Well, ten pounds is too much money for me. I don't think I can afford it. Could you not do the x-ray for a diagnosis, then, I do feel something in my chest or in my lung. It feels somewhat tense sometimes.

Dr Sree: Where is it? this tense feeling in your chest.

I pressed at a point three inches above the solar plexus, and he caressed it for a while and then said, 'There's nothing there. You haven't got any symptom for me to justify a diagnosis. You will need to pay the ten pounds for the x-ray.'

Kit: I feel something when I breathe. I seem that I cannot take a deep breath as I used to be able to.

Dr Sree: There's nothing wrong with you. You just try to make an excuse to have a free medical certificate. The certificate is for your personal use, and so you need to pay ten pounds.

Kit: Please, ten pounds is a lot of money for me. I have been working very hard at restaurants to save money for my study. This is only for the application form and I don't know whether I will be successful or not. If I cannot get the scholarship, I will probably need the money for my study here.

Dr Sree: That's not my concern. All I know is that you want me to lie for your personal cause, which I will not do.

Kit: I'm just asking you to help me. Anyway, who would really know whether there is anything wrong with me until you see the x-ray film?

Dr Sree: It's no use. You have to pay ten pounds.

Kit: Would it be possible that I only pay it if my health is good?

Dr Sree: No, you have to pay it before taking the x-ray.

Kit: But if there is something wrong with me, I would need medication. And the x-ray would have turned out to be diagnostic, wouldn't it? Moreover, then I would probably not be able to go to Japan,

but have to stay here in the UK And I will need every penny for my study. I have been fighting hard to fund myself through my study. I am living a hard life. I not only work in a restaurant, but live there! You have obviously been a student yourself, and probably have got a son. Please help a poor student in his good cause!

Dr Sree: No use arguing. You are wasting my time. There are other patients waiting to see me whom I need to see more than you. Either you pay the ten pounds or I do not give you a health certificate.

Kit: Could you give me some discount?

Dr Sree: OK! I will give you a certificate for half the price. You can pay only five pounds.

So he gave me a certificate for five pounds. I cannot remember whether I paid the money to him or whether I paid it at the reception. Neither can I remember whether there was a receipt for the x-ray, but I think there must have been.

'I nearly had to quit the application,' I told Asim after I had learnt that I was going to go to Japan, 'I did not have enough money for the x-ray, and my doctor gave it me at half a price.'

'He should have helped you,' Asim said, 'He should not have let you pay. Considering what you have been through trying hard for your study, I think he's hard-hearted.'

'It's already good that he let me pay only half the price,' I said to him, 'since I can go to Japan now, it no longer matters.'

§

I think Furuta tries to pick on me all the time. It is my turn now to present something interesting at our weekly seminar. I have chosen a topic on polytope of polynomials. The uncertainty in the parameters can be represented as a polytope whose dimension is equal to the number of parameters. By studying this polytope, one will know many things about the system. I planned to talk in Japanese, but Furuta interrupts right at the beginning and says that he prefers English. I think he wants other students to get used to listening to English. Anyhow, I can speak English better than I could Japanese.

One thing I learn from Furuta is that the first part of a technical paper, up to the first half, is the most important. Here he would demand that you get every single point clear, not only to yourself but also to other people. You have to read all the literature referred to in the first half of a paper. You have to be able to explain everything. The latter part of a paper is usually

left out or passed over quickly. I agree with him. A paper always starts by introducing the topic, and is as good as a lecture. All the originalities come next, and after these only investigation results and conjectures.

I am not good at doggedly deriving every single equations when I read a paper. If I do this, it hinders me so that I cannot see the overall paper as a whole. Instead of getting the point that it tries to get across, its theme, I would only get bogged down by petty details and the subject seems to lose its appeals and its hold on me. I need to have some faith when I read. I can often tell by instinct whether an idea sounds right. I only pay attention to details when I write.

When I am tired of being bombarded by too many disbelieving questions, I often think to myself, 'What an unimaginative, mechanical mind.'

'What's the use of proving someone else wrong,' I think, 'If you do not believe what I say, then just keep it to yourself! Or just disprove me and leave me alone. What is the use of hammering people's head again and again. Once is enough, more than that would be bullying.'

Today Furuta says to me after the seminar that he thinks I am more stupid than his students. But I think I am way more imaginative than most. The seminar has gone one hour longer than planned because I am a slow speaker and also because he questions me with imbecile questions all the time. Even when a question is useful, it will still be imbecile if not put tactfully enough.

He comes into the student room where we sit and asks me how I could have gotten my master degree. He said, 'Most of my students are better than you, even the undergraduate ones. How could UMIST have given you an M.Sc.? You would not have been able to get a master degree from here.'

'I have not been the best student in my class. In fact I was one of the worst,' I replied. The study at the Control System Centre over there is by far more difficult, and the lectures better in quality than what I have seen here so far.

'How could the standard of UMIST be so low.'

I made no reply.

'What did you study in your course there. Didn't they teach you anything?', he stormed.

'I studied for nine months and then did a research for three months. Even though my exam results were not good compared with my class-mates, I did complete my degree quicker than anyone,' I told him.

'How many subjects did you have to study?'

'About five courses. Or six in all including one Design Exercise. But each subject is actually made up of three different subjects. So there are actually about fifteen subjects,' I related.

'What are they, these subjects?'

'Let me see if I can remember them all. There is the Classical Control, Modern Control, Self-tuning taught by Martin,' I said, 'You know him. Then there are Nonlinear System ...'

'Who teaches the Nonlinear System?,' he interrupted.

'Peter. He wrote a very good book on nonlinearity.' The book is both profound and concise.

'That's OK. And then?'

'And then there is Physical Modelling.' The subject is very interesting and the methods using the Hamiltonians work like magic in modelling. 'Adaptive Control, Mathematics in Control Systems, Signal Processing ...'

'Who teaches Mathematics in Control?'

I told him the last name of David, the co-supervisor of my project.

'Fine,' said he and then, 'who else have taught you?' I said proudly that John has also taught me, and I thought he was a wonderful teacher, at which Furuta disagreed with me. According to the professor this teacher of mine had several papers published in some of the most famous journals in Control Systems, but then disappeared from the scene.

'Such inconsistency in the outputs,' he said, 'never comes from a good teacher'.

'And no good students are possible if their teachers are no good', he concluded.

I assume that the two have never met each other, and judging someone you have never met by your own values is not very nice, so I became disillusioned now regarding Furuta. Though this disillusionment never escalates, it remains until the day when I finally quit my study.

§

In Japan many people use bicycles. Police patrol the streets on bicycles. This makes the cities very safe, because there are always police around everywhere even in back streets. It is generally known that you can cycle on any footpath. There is close to nowhere where bicycles are not allowed.

I do not buy a bicycle here; I bring one back from Daiï with me when I visit the country. I have it registered with the police. It is compulsory to do this because the government wants to crack down on bicycle thefts. For this there is a small charge, which is quite expensive if you think in term of the Daiï currency. You are given a document to certify your ownership and a yellow sticker is put on the frame of your bicycle, usually just below the seat.

The adhesive of this sticker is so strong you can never peel it off; I once tried but could not. Normally the shop where you buy your bicycle will do the certificate for you. But in my case I have to go to the police and ask for one. At first I was a bit worried because I am afraid I might be questioned where I got the bike from, since it was obviously not a new bike. But the police I went to asked no questions.

§

In September 1997 I went to Singapore to present one paper at a conference. The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering branch in Singapore is so poorly organised that they have made a lot of mistakes regarding my paper. Firstly, they failed to write to ask for the camera-ready copy of the paper. My paper, *Simulation Techniques using RLS Algorithm for Object-location Problem*, has been accepted by both of the two referees based in Europe who wrote that I would hear the final decision from Singapore. Singapore never wrote, that is to say, not until it was already impossible to include my paper in the proceedings of the conference. Nevertheless they want me to come and present the paper anyway, I think because they still want to have the registration fee from me. Since my supervisor Furuta would not pay for the conference, I pay myself to come here.

Geewah is here with his wife Jocelyn, and I arranged with him via email to come and stay with them during the conference. I arrive the Changi Airport just after midnight on 1st September with my rucksack and my camera box.

I walk from the airport along the left-hand side of the highway to the Bayview Hotel, which is in the city, where the conference is to be held. I take some picture of the street light using my small tripod, so small it comes within nine inches long when folded, and a shutter release.

The highway runs straight ahead, and it is pretty straight forward to walk along once you are on it. It took me a while before I could find it at the airport where it was quite dark.

The highway is well flooded with orange light. There are plenty of trees along both sides, and where I walk I can see at a regular interval the leaves lit from behind by the street lamps, which, together with the warm breeze of the tropic, gives you a peaceful feeling. There are cars only at long intervals. At one point I find a bay. There I sit on a wooden desk watching in the dark the ocean, the dim contour of the shore lines, the distant light from ships, and listening to the sound of the waves. I stay here a little while, sometimes lying flat on my back on the table which has a kind of roof on top of it.

When I arrive at the city it is already light. I walk along a park by the sea where I meet some people jogging. There are more cars on the streets, but it is still at least two hours before the offices start.

Asking my way two or three times I finally find the hotel. It is still more than half an hour before the registration starts. I walk around and then up to a loft. I find myself a long concrete bench which is half concealed from the path. There I lie down on my back looking at the blue morning sky with some cloud above, just relaxing.

After the registration starts, I introduce myself to Dr Teo and hand him my paper to be photocopied and inserted inside the proceedings. Some more mistakes are made and I find out later, when they have already made all the copies, that they could not even sequence page numbers correctly. What is a PhD good for, I wonder, if you cannot even do this simple job correctly!

I never stay for too long in a conference. Generally I only attend the opening lecture and the session that I have to present a paper. I am usually there during the coffee and the lunch breaks, but for the rest of the time I normally go outside and walk around.

On that first day I walk around the city in the afternoon. I find a swimming pool and swim there in the hot sun. The reflection from the bottom of the pool makes it a little unpleasant, but the breezes of the open air quite compensate for that. I still have with me all my belongings. Singapore may be safe from thefts, but I put all my things down at the far end of the pool directly in line with the lane where I am swimming, and I swim in such a way that I can keep my eyes on them at all time. Or at least my eyes are on them most of the time as I swim the butterfly stroke towards, and the back stroke away from them. There are only the brief moments when my head is under the water during the butterfly stroke that I cannot keep watch of my things. I am very much addicted to swimming because it gives me a kind of relaxation that makes me feel completely a new person afterwards.

I go back to the hotel again in the afternoon. I get in through a side door and go into a toilet close by where I put on my jacket and tie, have some coffee and cookies before going off.

In the evening Geewah meets me at the station close to where he lives at an appointed hour, and then we walk to his apartment.

More than 85 per cent of Singaporeans live in flats, built and maintained by the Housing and Development Board, over 91 per cent of which are owned by the people who live in them. You can only buy these HDB flats if you are a citizen of Singapore. They are located in housing estates which are self-contained with everything one may need, from supermarket and school to sport and recreational facilities.

Their flat has got one living-room, two bedrooms, and one study. Geewah has his PhD thesis published as a book, and is now working on another. His PhD, which he did at UMIST with Dr Cook, is on Fuzzy Control. Dr Cook is specialised in the Nonlinear System, and he always tilts his head to one side when he gives his lecture. He speaks with a Mancunion accent where the

vowel *u* is pronounced as it is in German.

§

I seldom watch television. It is always said that your Japanese will greatly and quickly improve if you regularly watch the TV, so I guess this is the reason why my Japanese never improves. The trouble is that I do not like watching game shows, and these are in plenty here. Game-shows are programmes which make people do funny or crazy things, and put them to compete with one another. I much prefer documentary programmes, but these normally come as short digression within these game shows.

I once saw somewhere one of these documentary programmes where a big fish, sliced open, is put on the table and eaten. Raw fish needs to be fresh to taste well, but this is being carried too far when fish are eaten alive. Here the fish flips and falls from the table, and have to be picked up and put on the plate again. What I see now is something everyone has heard about but which not many have actually seen.

I went back to New Zealand in 1998 because my host sister Andy was marrying for a second time with John. They are a nice couple and are both members of the police. Years ago mum had sent me a newspaper clipping which has a picture of Andy practising with a pistol.

I did not know what wedding present to buy for them so my friend Megumi took me to a CD shop in Tokyo. After having a look around, I felt that I wanted to give the couple the music from the film *Titanic* but I was not sure whether this would be acceptable as a wedding present, so I asked Megumi. She told me that it would be fine, so I chose the CD. She had many coupons collected from having bought many compact discs and she let me use some of them to buy the CD.

The Titanic in real life may have been a catastrophe, but *Titanic* the film is a story about love which conquers everything. The story is a tragedy in the transcendental sense of the word.

My parents and my sisters joined me in Auckland from Daiï. They arrived one week later than I did. I flew from Tokyo to Auckland via Cairns in Australia.

I arrived Auckland in the evening and sat waiting at the airport until it is light. Then I took a bus into town. It was fortunate that I had made myself a life member of the Daiï Youth Hostel Association (YHA) because here in New Zealand you get discounts on buses and accommodation with the card. While waiting for a bed at the Youth Hostel I walked and looked around the city.

The city centre is very unlike the rest of the country but is likeable. It is a city proper and, later on in the day, filled with tourists. Nowhere in New

Zealand can you find more currency exchange counters in a single street.

The tourist information centre is next to a park but it was not yet open, so I carried on further before returning to it later. A few buildings nearby were being renovated, and you needed to walk under one construction site to reach the tourist information centre.

The coach station is close by and I decided that I would buy a ticket tomorrow morning to go to Christchurch. Then I walked back to the Youth Hostel to put my rucksack away. The place is easier to find when going from here. You only walk along the main road and then turn left to go steeply uphill towards it. Having thus settled down, I went again for a walk where I walked along the coast and through the university.

Even though New Zealand does not produce as many world famous figures as Scotland, among these few are some of the most sane and sound of character, just for examples, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Sir Ernest Rutherford. The *Lord of the Rings* was filmed here, mainly in the South Island. Some of the loveliest walks in the world are here, to mention but a few the Milford and the Routeburn tracks. I had been on the former but not the latter.

The milder of the Kiwi accent sounds similar to the accent of people from Kent. Some people say that many things here feel like England some decades ago, before it became crowded and ethnically diversified. The Maoris are healthy and nice. There is no problem between the descendants of the people who came from England and the local Maoris. In 1983 there were approximately six million people but about sixty million sheep in the country. Many of the farmers here are rich and own small aeroplanes and yachts.

§

I stop over at Cairns on my way back to Japan. Cairns, which is a small town in Queensland, is one of the eight towns and cities which have an international airport, the rest of which are Adelaide in Southern Australia, Brisbane also in Queensland, Darwin in Northern Territory, Hobart in Tasmania, Melbourne in Victoria, Perth in Western Australia, and Sydney in New South Wales.

Here I stay at a Youth Hostel. My room has three double beds and a big window that faces the beach. The window has so low a sill that you could easily climb over on to the roof of the shade which covers the footpath in front of the hostel. Sitting on the sill you see a promenade, some coconut trees and then the beach. To the left not far away there is a market where there are some food stalls and souvenir shops.

There are not many things to do in Cairns apart from diving. But there is also an old railway line that winds its course up to the mountain, passing some spectacular spots. At one point it passes over the face of a waterfall and get

splashes of water on your face if you stand at the window. Past the waterfall the train stops at a small station where you can get off and walk around the platform for a while. From there you get a nice view of the waterfall and the bridge.

At the end of the line we come to a small town. There is one restaurant shaped like a big ship. I walk around and find a nice, small library. There is a shop that sells musical instruments of the aborigines. There is one instrument called the *dijeridu* which has the shape of a tube, some of which are very long.

To go to the Reef you usually depart from Cairns, though there are other towns for instance Bundaberg and Townsville. It takes more than two hours to go to the Reef from here.

The Great Barrier Reef is a single structure made by living organisms which is around two million years old. After two and a half hours on the boat you are still completely surrounded by the Reef, and if you look at the horizon in the direction of the Pacific Ocean you could see a fine white line, barely perceptible, where the waves from the open ocean break against the boundary of the Reef, that is provided that you have a keen eyesight. For this I try to look but could see nothing, which is understandable for the fact that I never have on glasses that are properly prescribed. There are many activities to do, for example air tours, glass-bottomed boats, scuba diving, snorkelling, and reef walks whatever they are.

I buy a ticket to go snorkelling with a boat. On the boat we are told that we can try putting on the scuba mask and oxygen tank for ten minutes for free if we wish. Then after the period the trainer will sign to everyone to ask whether he wishes to go for a real dive. We only have to pay for the dive if we answer with a yes.

I go along with four other passengers. At the end of the trial when everyone is asked whether he would like to do the actual diving, I am the last one to be asked. I do not know why I signalled back a yes, but it must be because everyone before me has agreed to carry on. I neither want to dive this far from the shore, nor do I like sharks.

We hold each other by the hand in string and dive about ten metres down until we reach the sand bottom. There are corals everywhere and fishes are mostly flat and colourful. We have not been diving for long before a shark comes. It is a black-tipped reef shark about seven feet long. It looks at us sidewise, then goes around us in half a circle and disappears. Soon it returns again to the spot where we first saw it and starts to go around us in the clockwise direction again, when the trainer points towards the bottom of the boat and signals to us to follow him. So our dive has been cut short because of the shark, but I feel that I have had enough dive and am glad to get up on the boat.

After we have rested for a while, a net is dropped behind the boat and we

get into the water and hold on to it at the same time that the boat begins to accelerate. After that brief but adventurous dive this is a great fun. There is a great deal of splashing and being knocked about by the wave, both of which are at the best at the tail end of the net.

There was a man with a video camera who dived with us. On our way back we watched the video that he took. I feel a little dizzy and keep my head on the table most of the time when I sit down. I decide to buy a copy of the video because there was the shark in it, and I say to myself that I will never dive again.

In the evening I go for a walk at the shopping mall at the pier, and there I decide to buy another tour for the next day, this time to go snorkelling in a sailing boat.

The following morning we sail two and a half hour out to the Reef and snorkel where the corals come up to just below the surface. After the first dive we have for lunch on board some very nice seafood. Unfortunately I feel a little seasick and cannot eat much.

I meet three Japanese girls who come together. Among the trainers there is a young man who comes from England and who has been here two years. He obtained all his diving certificates here while doing some part-time jobs at the same time. After lunch we sail to another spot to do more snorkelling. The water here looks very dark, I think because all around underneath us are corals.

On the way back there is no wind, and so we turn on the motor and cruise slowly along. The weather has been cloudy since morning and we have had some light rain, but now it is perfect with the sun coming out. This has been another great day for me at the Reef.

In the evening I visit the three girls from Japan at their hotel, which is a two-storey building and looks like a dormitory. It is a nice place. Most people who stay there has come a long way in their car.

It has rained heavily in the evening before I set off to find the place. There are pools of water along the way and some of the roads are flooded. Because of the water I have to make several detours to avoid my feet getting wet, but in the end, when there are no other ways and I have to wade in the flood, they get wet anyway.

I knock at the door of their room a little past the appointed hour, sufficiently soaked and with my feet drenched in my shoes. We cook some food and eat, talking all the while; I am undressed and put into a bathrobe while one of the ladies iron my clothes and socks for me. With bare feet and kneeling on the thick carpet I spend a warm and memorable evening chatting with my new friends.

The European settlement here began in 1788, and the Commonwealth of

Australia was established in 1901. In has close to nineteen million people in 2000. As the total area is approximately 7.7 million square kilometres, this means that the average population density is 2.3 people in one square kilometre. More than seventy per cent of the population are Christian, and more than fifteen per cent are non-religion. Of the rest of the world, China has the highest population while India, at nearly three hundred people to each square kilometre, the highest population density.

Early immigrants to Australia mostly came from Britain and Ireland. Because of the need for workers, after the second World War there have been over half a million immigrants. Approximately one quarter of the population nowadays were born in non English speaking countries. Aborigines and Tores Strait islanders are the indigenous people. Since the 1970s more and more people with indigenous ancestry begin to identify themselves with the culture of their ancestors.

The weather here is hot because there are no high mountains. In the far north the climate is tropical with only two seasons, the wet and the dry seasons, similar to the Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia and Indonesia with tropical monsoons in the wet season.

The highest rainfall is in Cairns and Darwin during January and February. The interior of the country is dry, and most people live in the temperate zone of the far east and far south. The temperature recorded minus 23°C at Charlotte Pass, near Mount Kosciuszko, in 1994 and 53°C in the northeast inland in 1889. Deserts form thirty-five per cent of the land, some examples of which are the Great Victoria Desert in Western- and Southern Australia and the Great Sandy Desert in Western Australia.

The most familiar species of kangaroos are the red and grey kangaroos both of which grow up to two metres tall and can jump more than nine metres in one bound. Wallabies and wallaroos are smaller than these. Some of the other species of kangaroos live in trees. The tree kangaroos live on the treetops in the rain forests of New Guinea and north Queensland. There are also the rat kangaroos, about the size of a rat.

Other animals include the bilby, the numbat, the Tasmanian Devil and the wombat. The dingo which arrived six thousand years ago is the only native dog. A fence six thousand kilometres long extends from the Great Australian Bight to Darling Downs in Queensland to keep dingoes off livestock. Some of the birds are the bell bird, cockatoo, emu, finch, galah, jabiru or black-necked stork, kookaburra, lyrebird, parrot, rainbow lorikeet and rosella.

The Bogong moths, which used to be eaten by the Aboriginal people, migrate each year and swarm the Parliament House in Canberra which lies on their route. The golden bell frog is an endangered species and has at one time disrupted the construction of the site for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, and at another a multi-storey car-park, which was subsequently turned into

ponds specially built to preserve the frog colony.

In 1994 the prime minister of the UK, John Major, reintroduced an old word *yobs* through the media to describe youths with troublesome attitude, but here in Australia the word *yobbo* is always used to describe uncultured young men or those who drink too much beer.

In 1983 when I did my sixth form in New Zealand a university is called a *varsity*. Here, as well as in England, it is called a *uni*.

Words like 'sneakers' and 'spud' have the same meaning as they do in England, but are used more often in both Australia and New Zealand. But some words here have a very different meaning, for example *spunk* here means an attractive person where as in British English it means semen or courage; likewise 'spunky' here means sexy while over there it means plucky or spirited; also *togs* here is used for a swim-suit.

Some of the words you can only find here, for example *barbie* for barbecue, *chook* for chicken, *daks* for pants, *dunny* for the loo, *esky* for an ice chest for beer, *midi* for a medium sized glass to serve beer in in pubs, and *to shout* here sometimes mean to take your turn to pay. Also there are shortened words like *mozzie* from *mosquito*, *onya* from 'good on you', *ooroo* from 'see you later', *rellie* from *relative*, and the doubly unique *roo* for kangaroo.

QANTAS is no exception word in English but is an acronym for the Queensland and Northern Territory Air Services.

§

The year is now 2000 and I have come to live in England again for the third time. I arrive in London in the evening, spend the night sitting and sleeping sitting inside the airport waiting to catch a coach in the morning to go to Manchester where I am going to study.

When morning comes I buy myself a coach card which will last for one year during the time of which it will give me some discount whenever I buy a ticket. It turns out in the end to be expensive because I hardly buy any ticket during the whole year. I enjoy travelling, especially in the day time since I like looking at the scenery, but I never trust the vehicles. I am always filled with imagination when I look out from the window on my way somewhere.

Highways always keep their feet on the ground. They bear the heaviest traffic and therefore it seems sensible enough that engineers always have other roads go over them.

'Why cars?', I wonder to myself, 'The fossil fuel is running out, then why more cars?'

We travel along the M40 to Birmingham, or B'ham as the signs on the roadside says. I change to another coach at Birmingham to go to Manchester.

In Manchester I stay at the Grosvenor Place, which is a hall of residence of both University of Manchester and UMIST. I can hardly recognise the old Manchester that I used to know as it is now twice as busy and much more crowded.

I am going to study Language Engineering and Peter is going to be my supervisor. I have something that I want to do in my mind, but Peter wants me to change to another topic which he can supervise better and that is quite all right with me.

We live in a cosy flat where there are thirteen people. Chalyvopoulos is sometimes a little obsessed. He sticks up, for example, an obscene picture on the outside of the door of his room. I stays here a week until one elderly cleaning lady becomes so fed up with it and tears it off.

Deepak's ambition is to sleep with an English girl on his upcoming birthday. Dirk is well travelled and had lived in New Zealand for more than one year. Aziz's unspoiled soul loves all breathing creatures on Earth.

But apart from these people, we are in effect a Chinatown. Chloe and Kai, who live together, have friends to dinner every week. Michael's room always have three people sleeping in, though he only pays for one. Two more friends of his come to dinner every other day, one among whom refuses to talk with most people in our flat. We have only one cooker with four hobs on top, and we have two separate Chinese groups of people who constantly have big dining companies. On the other hand there is one lawyer, also from China, who so secludes himself such that I have never talked with him until two months afterwards.

I am volunteering again for the Community Action. We have a day care project where we bring elderly people together every Wednesday afternoon at the Main Building to have some tea and talk. The leader of this project is John who is quite ambitious and who later becomes the first controversial president of the UMIST Student Union. When this happens he moves upstairs to the president's office, and I refer to him as *John upstairs* to distinguish from *John downstairs* who is the manager of the Community Action.

Among the elderly people whom I have met back in 1995, Mary died three years ago, and Dolly two. Clare has moved from her home in Gorton to an elderly home and, with her positive attitude to life, still looks well despite her age, which has exceeded ninety. I have not met her, but her grand daughter has sent me a picture from her birthday. Annie's birthday is in October, but nobody invites me to come along. She is only ninety.

Retirement pension in the UK generally comes in two parts, one basic and the other over 80 pensions. The first one is about £50 and the second about £40. If you are over 80, you may have 25p added to your basic pension. Why this 25p is there I do not know. You can hardly buy anything with that amount of money, except a pint of milk perhaps.

Manchester was first built in 79AD as a fort by a Roman general Julius Agricola. The Roman called it Mamucium which means *breast shaped hill* for the fort rested on a sandstone ridge of that shape. It was meant to be a communications post between Deva and Eboracum, now Chester and York respectively.

The ruin that can be seen nowadays is the remains of the fourth fort, built from stone quarried at Collyhurst two miles away. The first fort was built in timber with soil walls. The final fort was built around 200AD in stone. It used to house around one thousand soldiers at one time.

Outside the Fort was the Vicus where families of the soldiers and the local tribe of Brigantes lived. There was a granary where grain was ground using quern stones to make flour for coarse bread.

The Romans left Mamucium in 410AD. During the Industrial Revolution Castlefield became an important site, but the remains of the castle in the field was destroyed when the canals and railways were built. The highway which cuts through the centre of the city from east to west has as its name a play upon the name of the Roman town. It is called the *Mancunion*.

§

Kai and Cloe are among my flat mates. Kai often works as a waiter through the catering company Gilds. He says it's good money and that I should come along and join.

So I sign up and get my first job working in a bar at the Manchester City Stadium during a football match. I learn how to operate the till. It is difficult to memorise the prices of all the food, snacks and drinks. After work it is already getting dark and I walk back to Grosvenor Place via Rusholme.

The company is owned by two men, one British and the other Pakistani. They do try every way possible to get the most out of us. We are made to buy our trousers needed for the work from them.

One day we go together in a bus to Liverpool to work at Anfield for a football match. One staff from Gilds who take us there is an African woman. Before we leave on the bus, Michael calls her a Negro when he talks to me, and I think that she must have overheard it. The word *Negro* is not derogative in Daiï and I think it may not be so in Chinese either. I know that it is offensive in English to call someone a Negro, but Michael might not know.

After we arrive at Anfield that woman tries her best to leave all Asians who come on the bus with nothing to do. She makes a great effort in asking around whether we can speak good English. Then she ask everyone who can understand English to raise his hand, and most of us do that, though think it an imbecile question to ask as everyone here would have already been interviewed at the time when he signed on for their job at the company. Then

she drives all the Asians back to sit and wait in the bus while the rest work at the stadium. Later she twisted the story by saying that she did ask, 'Who can't understand English?', and certainly enough those people who raised their hands in answer to the question, which was asked in English however poor at that, did so because they did not understand the language.

I am among those who supposedly have to sit on the bus for half a day with nothing to do, except that I tell the driver that I will go for a walk and then I walk into town. I walk along streets lined with shops and on the way back I look at the piers on the River Mersey. The river is so wide at this point where it soon joins the sea that it looks more like a gulf than a river. In fact it is what they call a firth in Scotland.

I lose my way a few times and have to ask after it. But in the end I reach a park on the other side of which is the stadium I seek. Walking across the ground there and along the path through the park is enjoyable, as there are very few people around and you could hear the humming sound of the crowd cheering from inside inside the stadium. A few kids are playing at the spring and garden here.

Back in Manchester we go to the Manchester United stadium where we will work during the night. I decide not to work here but go back with the bus. So except for my pleasant walk in Liverpool, I have done nothing today apart from sitting on the bus.

Back in our flat Cloe who did not join us to Liverpool are angry for the unfair treatment Kai and us have been through. She writes a letter which I agree to take to the manager of Gilds in person.

The name of one of the managers is also Aziz, the same as that of one of our flat mates. He repeats the lie that that woman made by replacing 'can' with 'can't', and then carelessly brush the matter aside saying he will investigate and get back to us.

The matter seems likely to me to be going on forever without success, which is not what I want. Neither do I want to give them our address, as you would never want to give away the address of friends when you complain who are also involved with the complaint you make. So when I see that he is going to brush the matter under the carpet, I tell him that this is a serious matter for, 'It is about racism,' I say. The word *racism* has a special effect on people in England to whom it works almost like a charm. It is good to think that people will treat you better if only not to be called a racist.

Aziz tells one of his staffs to drive me to the other office where we signed on for our jobs, to talk with his partner whom he says is in charge of that office.

After reading the letter, of which he has obviously known all the contents from Aziz over the phone while we were on the road, that partner of his says everyone deprived of his rightful work will get the full pay for the day even

though he may have done nothing. What is more, according to what he says we would have been paid the money anyway even if we had not written the letter. The fear of being called a racist here is really a magic!

Back in our flat, both Cloe and Kai are surprised when I tell them about the result and the success of our complaint. But the real surprise comes when people find the money in their bank accounts a week later, after which I become a hero. I never let anyone know how I did it. I had better stop at that lest it goes on unchecked and I be responsible for spreading the magic word around.

§

I go to London by train to attend the launching ceremony of the Year of Volunteering in UK which is this year. I can get off and on the train any time along the way, so I get off at Chesterfield. A few days ago I asked at the Tourist Information Office in Manchester about interesting places to visit on my way and have been told that there are Roman remains in Chesterfield. I find out here that the staff has mistaken Chesterfield for Chester and I could not see any Roman fortress here.

Chesterfield, however, is a nice town which is known for its landmark church with its crooked spire. The spire was made from wooden planks which had not been tempered and therefore had shrunk, and in so doing distorted out of shape. Like the Italian leaning tower at Pisa, the spire becomes more and more crooked each year. Some day when it gets too dangerously crooked there will be works done to freeze it in time such that to make it crooked just right, the same way as had been done with the leaning tower. In other words, you do not want to put things aright no matter how abnormal they may be so long as they are unique.

The Crooked Spire of St Mary and All Saints Church leans at 9 feet 5 inches from its true centre. It is 228 feet high. The church was dedicated in 1234. The open-air Chesterfield Market has over 250 stalls. Every Thursday there is a flea market, and car boot sale every Sunday.

I walk around Chesterfield trying to find Roman remains, but could find them nowhere. Instead I find a market and close to it a Tourist Information Centre. So I get myself some brochures, and upon being asked about Roman remains in Chesterfield a staff at the office says, 'There's no Roman remains here. It must be Chester you want. This is Chesterfield.'

'Where is Chester?', I ask, 'Have I passed it on my way here? I came from Manchester and I'm going to London, you see. But I would like to stop to have a look at interesting places along the way. I have been told that Chesterfield is very famous for its Roman remains.'

'Who told you that? You must have confused Chesterfield with Chester,'

that gentleman says.

'Do I also pass Chester on the train going from Manchester to London?', I ask.

'No. Chester is in another direction. It's not this way,' then, 'You won't pass it on your train if you are going to London.'

I start to protest, 'I was in Manchester yesterday, and I asked at a Tourist Information there. I told them that I was going to London by train but would like to stop somewhere along my way. I asked them whether they knew of some places interesting that I could visit. And one of the staffs there said that I could stop at Chesterfield and have a look at Roman remains.'

'Oh, no!', that gentleman says, this time with a smile. Then he turns towards a colleague of his and says laughingly to that lady, 'We've already sent them all the brochures and they still did this.'

So I come to the street laughing within and smiling. One problem solved, the reason why I could not find the Roman remains is that there is none here. No wonder all the people on the street whom I asked earlier on the hill had a puzzled look on their face, and no two of them gave the same direction though, and this is puzzling, each of them suggested me a direction anyway.

But the Romans must have been here too, because I did see at one place beside the road a ground that is fenced off with a sign which says, 'Excavation site'. I remember the sign also says something about the Romans, but that excavation site was very small.

Without Roman remains to look for, I suddenly find that I have plenty of time. So after walking briefly through the market in the open, I visit the Museum.

The Chesterfield Museum and Art Gallery is nice and small. The Gallery contains works by Joseph Syddall (1864–1942) who lived in Old Whittington. His paintings are in the style of the Impressionists, but his pencil drawings are more real life's. It would be difficult to make an impressionistic pencil drawing. Our mind can only play with colours to produce impressionistic effects.

§

I have arranged to meet with Met and Bill at a station close to their home in St Albans. I call Met from a public telephone at the station, and they come to pick me up soon afterwards. Bill comes in his new estate car. The last time I was at their place Bill drove a Ford Scorpio, but now he has many cars.

We pick up another car along our way and then go to his garage. I sit with Met in her car while Bill comes separately in his.

At the garage I help him put some glass panes into the estate car. The glass is so big that he has to lower the backs of all the back seats to make rooms for them. He tries to put one of the cars into the garage, but it is too wide so it would not fit in. In the end he is disappointed because he has to leave it outside.

I have a bottle of wine with me. Though it is only a table wine, it tastes very nice. I like most table wines. Sometimes I think they tastes as good as expensive *appellation* wines, but then again I would not have known what a very expensive wine tastes like. The opposite is true with country wines. These latter I can never drink. To me they taste like pungent alcohol.

§

The launch celebration of Student Community Action Week 2001 is held at one of the committee rooms situated in the committee corridor within the House of Lords. Student Volunteering UK whose patron and directors is Lord Redesdale, organise the event. The theme for the events in the coming week is, 'Do it, love it, shout it'. There is also a conference in Liverpool at the end of the week from 23rd to 25th February.

We stay at Travel Inn which is located in a building block called London County Hall. It is on the south bank of the Thames River and behind the London Eye. On Sunday 18th February I arrive London by train and visit the British Museum.

I see among other things there the Mycenean clay tablets written in Linear B script which is an ancient writing of Greek and was deciphered by Michael Ventris. Not long ago I had read a book about his decipherment, and now when I am here at the British Museum I know exactly what I want to see.

There are few tablets on display, and they are very small, about two by five inches. The writings are syllabic, which means that each symbol represents a consonant and a vowel, a unit generally called morpheme. The famous Rosetta Stone is there, but to me these small clay tablets fascinate me more. Because they are syllabic like the Gana's of the Japanese language, and because Greek is closely related to Sanskrit and Pali in India, they show the link between Asian and European cultures.

There is a ceremonial bronze dirk on display which dates to 1400–1300 BC, and an Anglo-Saxon sword in its rusted self and a shiny reproduction of it. There is also a drinking horn salvaged from a ship burial site near Sutton, and a spear head from Kiev. I make a sketch of the dress of the Eskimos called the *igloolik*. The British Library used to be here at the British Museum, but has now moved to its present location at St Pancras.

From British Museum I walk to the accommodation. In the evening we meet in a pub at the Travel Inn. Anant has lost all his money in the slot

machine there and starts to ask for pound coins from people around. Andrew gives him one, and he loses it again in no time. I do not think Andrew will get his money back, neither do I think he likes his friend much thereafter.

There is only drinking after this, so I retire to my room. I have a shower and then go out for a walk. I walk along the bank of the river Thames, take a stroll in the Waterloo station, cross the Waterloo Bridge, then walk back along the opposite bank and cross over again on the Westminster Bridge.

Almost every museum in England has an Egypt collection. There are so many mummies and mummy cases here that one cannot help but worry whether there is still any left in Egypt. The British Museum in particular has a very large collection of these. Huge stones and parts of buildings or temples have somehow been transported here. It is difficult to imagine what on Earth had made people carry these kinds of thing over here. The Manchester Museum also has quite a good collection from Egypt. Archaeologists at the University of Manchester manually reconstruct the countenance of mummies at the time when they were alive. The Ancient Egyptian collection at the West Park Museum in Macclesfield came from the three visits to Egypt made by Marianne Brocklehurst towards the end of the 19^{th} century.

My room is number 252. It costs Student Volunteering UK around £70 a night for me to stay here. There is no keys for the room, but you insert your keycard in a slot to open the door. Outside the hotel, the ticket office for the London Eye is to the left and then left again.

Jess, Rachel, Zoe and I take the Community Action's minibus to Liverpool for the conference. Jess is driving. All of us have been excited about it for weeks. Jess drives so well that it is next to no time before we arrive in Liverpool. However, it takes us the same amount of time driving around Liverpool trying to find the Adelphi Hotel. Finally we find it, and Jess parks the minibus in the parking ground of the hotel before we walk to the hotel.

I find to my surprise that people here seem to be sensitive against races, seemingly more so than people in Manchester. The staffs at the reception ignore me until I am the last one to be shown to my room. But like a compensation for that, I find to my surprise again that Student Volunteering UK has booked a spacious suite for me. I am alone in my room whereas the girls have to stay together in one room.

This is probably because of the nature of the courses which each of us has chosen. All the courses I have chosen are about how to organise your own volunteering group from scratch, while the others have chosen practically only courses about practical works of volunteers. Therefore I am treated as managers of a group while my friends are being treated as volunteers.

Zoë has sent me a draft of her book *Make volunteering count* and asked my opinion of it. She is among the organisers of this conference, so I could have a word with her about the book briefly when she is free. I told her that I liked

the part on how to behave in an interview. But the title is too long, I prefer a terse name, for instance, *Volunteering Counts* which, for one thing, reflects your conviction. Also, I think that the back cover should be more attractive and the book should be serious without being serious. 'Don't underestimate volunteering,' I would say somewhere in my book if I were to write one. But Zoë later gives her book a new name, *The art of crazy paving.*

There are so many volunteer groups in the UK. There is one Crusaders Union in St Albans, Hertfordshire where Bill and Met live, though I do not really know what it does. Some of the names are more straight forward, for example Scout Association or National Council of Hindu Temples. There are organisations for deaf-blinds and there is another one for the abolition of vivisection.

For the year 2000 and 2001 I am one of the committee of the Community Action at UMIST. I also sit as a student representative on both our university's Library Sub-Committee and also our Postgraduate Study Committee. I usually have something to offer at a meeting, though most of the time none of what I have suggested is carried out.

§

Rusholme begins where Oxford Road ends. In 1995 the area was so deserted that you would surely be mugged if you walked there after dark. Now it is bustling like Soho well past midnight everyday. All the shops and restaurants here were not there back then. Large restaurants here makes around £20,000 a week, whereas smaller ones could probably make half of that. Here, as in everywhere else, you can find kebabs. Shish kebab dates a thousand years or more to the traditional nomadic food in Anatolia. In Turkish, *shish* means *skewer* and *kebab* means *roasted.*

Manchester in the 18^{th} century was like Chester or York, a compact market town. Then came the industrial revolution which made the population during the fifty years of the mid-19^{th} century double every decade. The grains of the city became coarser as row upon row of Victorian town houses filled in the space. After the Wars these grains shrunk or disappeared like plant cells devoid of sap. The wholesome structure disintegrated into clusters of grains. Both these islands of grains and the void in between them became unsafe. Prestigious areas like Gorton turned into a dangerous area while lovable and peaceful residential areas like Moss Side became infested with gangs and murders.

Funding from the European Union has helped the North West since 1994. The fund splits into two main strands, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. After the reform of the European Structural Funds in 1989, regional actions of the Union were reinforced. Those who have benefited so far are the World of Glass in St Helens, the new home of

the Hallé the Bridgewater Hall, the heritage railway line the East Lancashire Railway, the Lowry on Salford Quays, the Globe Centre, the Tate Gallery in Liverpool, the Blue Planet Aquarium in Ellesmere Port, Greater Manchester's Metrolink, Middlebrook and its Reebok Stadium, the Imperial War Museum and Liverpool Airport's expansion.

Platt Field has a big park with a lake where there are boats and an island in the middle, and plenty of water-birds. Five years ago you would not have felt safe in a park, but now all parks feel like a bazaar.

There is at the Platt Hall here a gallery of costume which has been a part of Manchester City Art Galleries since 1947. The final plans of the hall was designed by Timothy Lightoler in 1762.

In early twelfth century the Platt estate belonged to the monastic order of the Knights Hospitaller of St John of Jerusalem who in 1190 gave it to Richard de la More whose descendants changed their name to Platt in the thirteenth century. It was sold to Raphe Worsley in 1625, and John Carill Worsley commissioned William Jupp in 1760, John Carr in 1761, and finally Timothy Lightoler in 1762 to design a new Platt Hall to replace the old one which was built in timber. The building looks from the outside like a big box but the staircase inside is exquisite.

Blouses in 1907 shows bloated shoulders while those in 1917 have their shoulders plain. Doublets for men were popular during 1625–35, while for women it was stays during 1775–1800 and bloomers during 1896–1900. Textiles industries in Manchester started in mid-eighteenth century.

§

There are always job presentations in Manchester. I always go along whenever I know there is one and if I have the time. When I was here in 1994 I was very poor and these presentations represented free food.

At the time when I lived there the Moberly Hall was still catered and you had two meals a day, breakfast and dinner. I always saved some of the breakfasts for lunches, usually an apple or an orange and some cookies.

Asim did that too. But that was not quite enough for us, so whenever there was a presentation by a company we went along and considered it a feast. They did not mind because we listened to their presentation and we behave in our eating and never drank too much. Asim could not drink, he is a Muslim. But sometimes in a party when Ken and I saw him drinking something which we knew had got alcohol in it and we told him in earnest he seemed rather disappointed. He could enjoy the drink so long as no one announced about its alcoholic contents. After that we knew and the three of us tried to forget he was a Muslim.

BP used to stand for *British Petroleum* but has now become *Beyond Petroleum.* Gas companies have in effect divided into two groups, one sticking to the oil industry, the other trying to get away from it or at least to make people think they do.

Shell is among the first group. I went to their presentation and at the end just before they let us go to the food one woman who had been sitting in the front row stood up and spoke to us. She told us not to work for Shell, that the company was a murderer, that the following week there would be a conference organised by wind energy companies somewhere and she could give the detail about it to anyone who would be interested in going. She said that it would be better to work for those companies than to work for Shell.

Shell was shocked. Their representative said that they also have the wind energy. They sure have a wind energy section, but I think it is only for show because I went to another presentation by them and when I told them that I would like to apply to that section they discouraged me by saying that I would not be successful if I applied there. So I think that Shell is going to squeeze the last drop of oil from the earth and let all their oil field run dry long before they would start thinking about any renewable energy.

Back at the presentation we left off, there was also a man who came with that woman who spoke up against Shell. So there were at least two activists there. While we were eating they stayed around and talked to the students who were there and then to the presenters because the latter came and talked to them.

I think they were asked to leave and they did. Not long afterwards all the light went off, there was a fire alarm, the security staffs of the Moberly Hall came in and everybody had to leave the building.

I flowed along with the outgoing students. I noticed at the bottom of the stairs on the ground floor that the glass covering a fire alarm button was broken, so I pointed it out to the security guards. About five minutes afterwards we were upstairs and eating again.

Powergen has raised wind turbines to form a wind farm off the shore near Blyth in Northumberland. There is also the St Breock wind farm in Cornwall. In 1998 British Petroleum merged with Amoco, Atlantic Richfield or ARCO, Burmah Castrol, and Vastar. After discussions they decided that the new company thus created should still be called 'BP', only now the full name has changed to the name already mentioned to be in accord with the change in the strategy. It turns out the be a good abbreviation which could stand for many thing from big picture to better products. Power companies from now on will have to strive towards renewable and environmental friendly energies to be successful.

The career service of both the University of Manchester and UMIST makes pamphlets of information about jobs and career fairs. One such publication

is called Career Wise and is updated I think every month. Here it says, a company called Ding Ding Dang gives a salary of 1,000 pounds sterling per month for teaching English full-time in South Korea. The job only require a sense of humour and the ability to teach children. A salary of 1,000 pounds per month is not that bad, though it looks so at first because companies here always give an annual, not a monthly salary.

§

Monday 7^{th} May 2001 was the date I flew to Italy. In the morning I make many pizzas to bring with me on the trip. Then I have to telephone NatWest about my Switch card, which I think was lost. Through some negligence, a teller girl at the bank forgot to give me back my card on Friday afternoon. I did not know where the card was, so I telephoned the card lost centre to have it cancelled. They said they would send a new card to my home at Grosvenor Place within a week. But since I am going to be away in Italy for ten days, I want to make sure the card is sent to the bank instead. The porter of Grosvenor Place, seeing that it is about a lost cash card, lets me use the telephone at the reception to call the bank.

I fly in a British Midland plane to Heathrow first, and from there on another plane to Rome.

La traversata della linea del cambiamento di data fu magnifica. The view from the plane is magnificent. At one point, the view of Mont Blanc to the left of the plane is beautiful. The peak of that mountain seems so close to us. It is white, of course, as it is named a 'white mountain'.

As we fly over the Alps the light gradually dies down. The light of the setting sun puts shadow on the geological features below and makes contours of the ground stand out. It is a fantastic sight to see. We virtually fly into the night. There is a unique line that divides the light from the dark and, once we fly pass that line, everything around us suddenly becomes dark. The sunset when seen from thousands of feet above the ground is quite a memorable sight to watch. The strange thing is that the atmosphere of the mountains below reaches up to where we are, and I feel the solitude of the night as though I were down there amid the forests.

Reaching Rome at night I watch fellow passengers go home, and then spend the night at the airport walking around, sit writing my travel log, and sleeping. I brought with me an Italian dictionary that I borrowed from the Central Library in Manchester. With this I try to record something in Italian. But it is a very tedious job, so I give up after half a page. It is good to be able to let sleep shut your weary eyes, even when you have no bed to lie in.

The following day I catch a bus into Rome. There, following the direction I received from the Youth Hostel in Manchester, I change into another bus to

go to the youth hostel where I am going to stay. At the hostel there is a big locker for everyone to put all his belongings in. But you need to bring your own lock and key, of which I have not thought about and therefore have not brought with me. I decide to carry my rucksack with me all day since I have heard so much about thefts in Rome.

First I catch a bus to Vatican. There is a gate where all the cars go in. People always go there and have to be told that it is not open to the public. I have done that too, and have been told that I should go to the Vatican museum instead. I leave my rucksack with the security at the reception. When I leave the museum at the closing time in the afternoon I saw a Japanese girl talking with the security staffs. Some of her things seems to be missing.

The ceiling of the Sistine Chapel has been cleaned some years ago and looks better than the pictures in the book I have at home. The frescoes by Michelangelo seem to become alive as they take on a fresh look. Not only this, but the whole museum and its collections are invaluable. I head for the Sistine Chapel first, and stay there until it is closed. Then I wander around the museum until that in turn is closed.

In the Art History class at Ashburton College I learnt about Raphael's *The School of Athens* and Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. My dream comes true when I can look at it with my own eyes. The frescoes of Raphael was commissioned by Julius II while those of Michelangelo by Sixtus IV. Also at the Museum of Vatican is a tapestry in the picture of an elephant with a huge mouth, made by the school *Nuevela Scola* of Raphael, which does not looks very realistic. This is I think because there were no elephants in Italy.

Houses and buildings here in Rome can be very colourful. After the museum I walk around. I walk past a narrow lane where there are two buildings of different colours facing each other on the opposite sides of the street, one old rose while the other orange. The orange-coloured house shines from the light reflected off the old-rose-coloured one.

At Flaminiol two roads, both of which are two-way, come so close together that they nearly touch, leaving a gap of about one metre in between. Along Travere near Castela Sangelico there are tall trees, fifteen metres or so, whose leaves look so green and transparent.

The currency here is the Lire whose symbol is the same as the pound Stirling. I am frequently frightened by the price of food written in supermarkets. One book may cost 30 grand!

The bus number 32 goes from Ottavian to the Youth Hostel where I stay. I have a strong camera box with me which I use for sitting upon. When I sit on it I would be in a position lower than the line of sight, which makes me able to observe what is going on around me. At the Ottavian stop I sit on my box and watch a gang of three or possibly four people communicating with one another in secret gestures. I think they are pickpocketers. I did not notice

that they were together until I secretly observe them from the low position that I sit. On the surface they seem to be strangers. One of them must have gotten tired in his legs from standing waiting for a prey. He got on a tram number 19 and come back in it again after a while.

At the hostel I met a guy from Holland who said his name was Paul, but who spoke Italian. He is a little bit queer, which makes me think about Amsterdam and wonder whether it is a gay paradise.

I see someone wearing a sunglass that clips on to normal glasses, but hangs down on the inside of them instead of on the outside as clip-ons normally do, so that the shape of your glasses is not hidden behind the sunglass. The glass is in one piece, and curves around on both sides of your eyes like goggles you use in laboratories.

A train ticket to go to Pisa costs around 30 grand, which is less than half of the price of the ticket going to Venice, so I make up my mind that I would go to Pisa. The journey starts from Roma Termini, passing Cecina, the sea, through a tunnel, the sea again, and then Livorno Centrale and finally Pisa Centrale. Along the way I see a big heifer with long horns curved outward so that it must be over one and a half metres from one tip to another.

Here in Pisa everything leans. Both the Tower and another cylindrical structure along Piazza del Duomo lean southwards. From Pisa Centrale station I walk across the river Arno and then turn left passing the Scuola Normale Superiore on the Piazza dei Cavalieri towards to tower which, together with several other structures, is on a large patch of ground with soft grass you could roll on.

The Tower is being girdled and pulled with steel cables while works are carried out in the ground underneath it to stop it from leaning further. There are signs which say that it is closed to the public for the moment; the word closed in Italian is *chiuso*. More than a month later I read in a newspaper in Manchester that the garter around the tower is going to be removed a few weeks later. In November tourists will again be able to go up to the top.

The tower has been built in three stages; in the 12^{th}, 13^{th} and 14^{th} centuries respectively. Soon after the work began it was realised that the tower was leaning. At each stage of the construction engineers always built the new portion upright. But as the tower gradually tilts more and more each year, these current verticals result in three different inclinations in different parts of the tower, to the effect that nowadays it is curved in three steps.

The number four on clocks is interesting in that sometimes it is written IIII and sometimes IV. At Forum in Rome the former is the case while at Basilique Notre-Dame in Nice the latter is.

I get on a train to go overnight towards Nice. It passes Ventimiglia, Menton, Monaco Monte-Carlo which is a neat station underground with announcements in French, and then Beaulieu sur Mer. The train passes innumerable

tunnels and coves along the coast.

§

There is a spot in Nice where I like to sit and eat. It is to the east of the beach, high up on a cliff but just off the road side. It overlooks a sun-bathing place on huge rectangular concrete cubes which are placed just off the rock face. These cubes rest on flat surfaces made by paving concrete on rocks. They stand over six foot tall and placed beside one another with a gap in between.

Between these cubes and the rocks and sea there is a shower tap. Below the rocks there is the sea surrounded by a cove and there are some corals which appear as dark patterns on the seabeds when looked at from above. Today there is someone swimming about down there wearing a snorkel and long flippers.

My last and only night in Nice I meet one American who says that he is from San Francisco or was it L.A. I cannot remember. He suggests that we find somewhere to stay the night outside together waiting for our trains. He says he always stay at friends' places wherever he goes. He finds it cheaper that way when you travel. Obviously he does not know anyone in Nice because he is homeless like me.

We are at the train station, and I noticed a sign which says that the station will be closed after midnight. I sit down on my camera box and use a bench as a dining table. He comes and sit close by and starts a conversation. After a while he lies down on the floor while I, still sitting on my box, embrace my rucksack in front of me and rest my head on the bench. Less than fifteen minutes later, the security guard comes and tells us to leave because he is going to shut the station for five hours.

We walk along together and I suggest that we go to sit and wait on the benches by the seaside. But when we pass a park my companion suggests we sleep in there. The park must be the size of a football ground. It has no fences, so we enter and soon find ourselves a spot among coconut trees. We lay ourselves down on his sleeping bag which is spread out and used as a mat. The rustling sound of the leaves above our heads reminds me of other nights in my life with a similar sound. I always remember this sound in the tranquility of the night well.

Anyway, I do not know if I could trust this man who talks so well, in fact a little too much, and whose talk of which is, whether intentionally or not, too readily agree with mine. So just before I am lulled by his monotonously soft talks into sleep, I make up my mind and tell him that I will walk to the seaside. I get up and walk away. I am not sure if it is safe on your trip to fall asleep when your are alone beside someone whom you have just met. Being a traveller, he seems to know too well quiet spots to sleep at night in this town.

I walk on until I reach the seaside, then sit down on a bench under the moon and among the sound of waves receding from the gravel beach. The moon is almost round. A few people pass by on their roller-blades, bicycles, or motorcycles. There are also some lone strollers and a few couples. Most of these people are tourists. A few of them are somewhat dubious.

I have managed to get some sleep after three. It gets colder and between four and five o'clock it gets so cold I cannot stand sitting down. I cannot bring myself to sit down. I am wearing a leather jacket but have only one pair of thin trousers on. When it is ten to five, I start off and head for the station. It is good to be walking again. At least now I know where I am going.

The streets are absolutely still. It is still very early and I hardly see anybody. It must have been the cold breeze; I cannot wait until I reach the station to go to the toilet, so I branch off to the right at one point to a quiet road and there relieve my bladder at a tree.

I walked past the park where I left John lying the last time I saw him, but decide that I do not want to know if he is still there. From what he said he must have left on a train at five, except that there is no trains leaving at five as far as I know. I buy myself a cup of cappuccino from a vending machine before getting on the train.

Vienna

Here I sit opposite to the monument of Beethoven thinking what to do next. I fall asleep for perhaps five or ten minutes, and when I wake up it is still late afternoon and the sun is shining but it feels chilly.

I decide to walk to a park east of the town where the trees form straight lines which intersect one another. On my way there I stop at a drinking fountain and here change my socks. The place is a small opening at a junction among some residential buildings.

Suddenly a loud music comes from one of the flats high up and there are voices of people deliberately talking loudly. There are flashes of flashlight once or twice. People around here may do this on a usual basis when some homeless people stop here for a rest.

It is already past the closing hour as written at the gate when I arrive at Augarten. But seeing a girl with her two big dogs jogged past me into the park, I follow close behind her heel. The park is not to be closed until nearly half an hour afterwards. There are children playing some game with a bat.

In the park there are two towers as black as the Two Towers of Tolkien. Trees are huge here and straight lines they form are very straight. In a few places there is an abrupt break in the wall of trees which allows you to look through to the otherwise hidden glades behind. Some of these openings look nice and comfortably breezy inside.

The evening is nice. It is getting dark now. In the end I sit down at a place not far from the gate waiting for the park to close. The park staffs come along in a car and announce to tell everyone to leave.

From the park I walk back along a different route. When outside the park, I turn right and walk along in that direction. A store at a petrol station tries to make me pay more for a fruit juice than the price written. I manage to pay only the usual price, but I in fact should not have bought anything from them at all.

Along the Donaukanal there are food stalls and restaurants with things for people to play, for instance shooting, trampoline or whatever the canvas thing that you bounce on top is called, and beach volleyball.

I sit and watch the traffic light for a while. Then I carry on along and walk down to the bank of the canal where there is a boat and people partying in it. I sit there watching the boat while eating some food from the can. After that I walk back up to the street level. Then I walk along to the gas station where I had bought milk the previous night, which opens 24 hours, and there buy another milk.

Austria is very French. The further westwards you go the more German it becomes. Therefore Salzburg feels more German than does Vienna. I noticed the nature of copper sheeted roofs for the first time while climbing up the hill in Salzburg. Salzburg is surrounded by mountains while Brennero is inside them. It is like a border town lived in by some hill tribes.

Normally you would walk to the further carriages because you think they would be empty. People usually think that all the first few carriages are always the first ones to be filled up. Everyone must have been thinking this way and I finally find an empty compartment in the first carriage, but not before having exhausted all the other carriages first. The compartment has six seats, with seats facing one another in pairs to form two rows. If you pull out the seat and press down the back rest you get half a bed. Do the same thing to the rest and you get three beds.

Similar to Japanese, words in Italian always end with a vowel. But unlike the former, they never end with a 'u'.

§

Translation can never be the same as the original. At a synagogue here in Florence the written explanation in Italian says that the centre dome is made of sheeted copper which has the characteristic green colour while the English version says something similar, except that instead of the colour green being characteristic to copper it says the copper has turned green.

Both synagogue and ghetto are religious places. The only difference is that a synagogue is built for the purpose but a ghetto is incorporated into a

dwelling.

I walk up to the Michelangelo Platz. There are several groups of tourists from Japan. I sit down under the sculpture by Michelangelo eating a can of Celi in brine.

After I have finished eating it I sit there absorbing the atmosphere around me and look at the view of Florence from afar. From this distance the town looks all red and pale orange, a lovely sight to watch. I always like warm colours. The walk uphill to get to this place has been exhausting with my rucksack and all.

The groups of tourists came in coaches. They stay for half and hour before being picked up by the coach again to go to some other places. Two Japanese girls run towards her coach following another in black who says, '*Mou ozokatta. Minasan hayakatta,*' which means that they are already late and everyone else was so quick. Their guide has already been walking around a while ago to tell everyone to go back to the coach.

One of the girls drops something which looks like a piece of paper from where I sit. 'It could well be a bank note,' I think. It takes me a while to gather up my belongings and walk to the point. Meanwhile a group of some women and a man walk pass that point. The man seems to have noticed the piece of paper on the floor but had done nothing with it.

It turns out to be two banknotes of 10,000 Lire each when I finally get there. I quickly pick them up and walk to the coach which still has not left the spot. I am sure I can reach them before they leave and give the money back to the girl.

But when I reach the coach it turns out to be not only one coach but three, all of which seem to be of different groups. One coach has just left when I arrived and I could see neither the two girls nor the girl in black. They must have gotten on their bus which was already waiting, and it must have already driven off.

I spend the next ten minutes walking around with the banknotes held between the thumb and the forefinger of one hand, trying to find them among other groups of Japanese people some of whom must have wondered what I want when I approach and ask whether everything is all right. I should have asked instead whether everyone in their group is alright. But anyway I could not find the girl I looked for.

Two times already that I have missed the view from the train, for the reason of having had a hard sleep the night earlier. The first time was when I went from Rome to Pisa, the second time when from Verona to Florence.

Florence has many American schools, colleges and universities, for example Drake, Harvard, New York, Syracuse, University of Michigan and University of Wisconsin. For *scuole di lingua* there is the Centro Linguistico Italiano

Dante Alighieri among others. The mails cost the same to within Italy and to countries in the E.U., likewise the mails to America cost the same as those to Asia. There is one Church of England, the St Mark's Church on Via Maggio.

§

The last day of the trip I leave Florence for Rome. Just one station off from the city we pass through a long tunnel inside which we spend a couple of minutes. This is to be followed by two more tunnels of shorter lengths.

A EuroStar is a fast train which I seldom use. I normally travel on either a EuroCity or an InterCity. Today a EuroStar is thirty-five minutes late, and I wonder to myself as I sit on a EuroCity whether it worths travelling on the first one or rather that one uses the latter when the former runs this late.

They put a tractor on adaptive wheels and run it on the rail tracks. The tractor has four wheels, two large ones in the back and two small ones in the front. Each of these wheels rests on top of a wheel with flange to run on top of the rails, coupling with it in such a way that when the former moves forward the latter will move backward. The tractor therefore must run in the reverse gear if it wants to move in the same direction it is facing, and vice versa. What you could do with invention!

We pass S. Giovanni Valdarno, then Arezzo at 11.13 and Chiusi Chianciano Terme at 11.59. The train is more or less running in a straight line but there are so many tunnels that by 13.25 we must have passed through more than ten of them.

After arriving in Rome I have the rest of the afternoon free so I could visit the University of Rome. Then I get on the 19.36 train at Tiburtina and soon find myself arriving at the Fumicino Airport.

§

The metro stations in Rome have two free magazines called Leggo and Metro. While I am here there are news about Miss Universe contest, extraterrestrial bacteria extracted from ancient meteorites by researchers at the Federico II University in Naples, a protest held at the Colosseum in Rome, Germany saying that strawberries and fruits from Italy are treated by chemicals which are poisons to human, and Michael Schumacher in Austria. The Horoscope columns say, *Ariete, Toro, Gemelli, Cancro, Leone, Vergine, Bilancia, Scorpione, Sagittario, Capricorno, Acquario and Pesci.*

Yesterday's visit to the Citta University was quite interesting. I had a look at the Department of Physics and the Geology and Mineralogy Buildings.

At the former there was an exhibition where old high-voltage meters are displayed. A plaque on the wall said something about Fermi and the history

related to him. There was one photo there where he was taken in the company of Heidelberg and where surprisingly Pauli is also not excluded. There was another photo of five Italian physicists contemporary to and including Fermi, all of them young and famous.

The Mineral Department has a mineral collection room which only opens until one P.M. on Friday, and it was already late afternoon of Friday yesterday when I was there so I never find out what the collection is like.

However, there was a corridor in which were hung large posters some of which shows geological features, others mineral deposits. Models of all crystals are displayed on shelves in glass cases. Apart from these there were a gallery of contemporary, and another one of classical art, but these also were not open yesterday when I was there.

There was a library called Liberia Alexandra. The lift which goes up to it is dilapidated and has walls of corrugated aluminium. the ceiling inside the lift was covered with vandalised scribbles. The shape of the lift was that of an oblong rectangle with the door on one of the longer sides and way off its centre to one side, which makes the lift looked very odd.

That visit to the university makes my going from Termini to Tiburtina station on foot seems worthwhile. The train ticket to go to the Fumicino Airport costs 9,000 Lire if you go from Tiburtina and 17,000 if from Termini. So admittedly it was only in order to save some money that made me walk.

When I first arrived here eleven days ago from Heathrow, I asked a policeman at a kiosk at the train station at the airport about how to go from there into Rome, and he said that I could buy a Metro/Bus ticket from the kiosk for 8,500 Lire and use it to go to the city centre as well as to go on any bus or metro for the rest of the day.

I bought one and proudly handed it over to a controller on board the train when he came around and asked to see a ticket, and he handed it back, did not seem to mind. But I found out later written on the back of the ticket that it does not include the trip to the airport from either of the two main station, and so I think that trip I made from the airport into Rome should likewise be excluded. That controller must have noticed this but for some reason had decided not to say anything. I am only a foreigner anyway who had just arrived, or so he must have thought.

The night before that I stayed at the departure, upstairs at the airport, and waited. The next two nights I stayed at the Youth Hostel to which I had made a booking and paid for through the International Booking Network.

None of the staffs at the hostel was kind. This was perhaps another reason why I liked to stay outside in train stations instead of spending a night at more hostels.

When I told him that the lock I had was too small for the padlock, one

staff, instead of directing me to a vending machine which sells locks close by, only said that he could not help. I had only to come across that machine by chance to realise how unhelpful one human being can be to another.

I knew that there is a booklet containing details of Youth Hostels in Italy, and you could ask for it for free. So I asked one staff at the counter for one, but he refused to give me any and yet afterwards tried to sell it for 5,000 Lire I think, I cannot remember.

Planes which take off from the Leonardo da Vinci Airport (Fiumicino) fly straight over the sea. Now that I am back home, my finger nails have grown a little over one millimetre longer and my beard has become three to four millimetres long and is uneven.

During the trip I stayed two nights at an airport, two at a youth hostel, one on the train, one by the seaside, and the rest at train stations where I once slept on an empty train.

On the way back we see from the plane two islands to the right hand side, the second one larger than the first. The coastline of Italy alone is already a spectacular sight to look at. Then there is Nice to the left.

I sit on a window seat two rows behind the right wing. Most seats behind me are empty. May be the idea is to put the load on the head or middle of the aeroplane where the wings are to get the best balance because that is where it is most stable.

We must be flying somewhat higher when we pass the Alps on our way back than we did when we flew to Rome, because we do not pass over Mont Blanc at as close a range and we can see more mountains of the range than we could before. Now we can see a carpet of all the snowy peaks towards the 1.30 direction.

We are flying away from the sun, keeping it behind and to the right of us. This makes the landscape ahead of us look better because no light gets into your eyes. I changed seats several times. There is a backmost seat which seems to be a favourite of one air hostess, because I notice that she has put her hat there and she shooed me away when I sat there too long. The view of the Alps from that seat is terrific. Another romantic woman at work!

My beard must be as grisly to look at as it is prickly to feel. I forgot to bring a razor along with me, so I have left the beard grow unabated for ten days.

Last night at the airport one security staff knocked at the door of the disabled toilet where I was inside. Two more asked me later for passport, which I duly showed. Two people who slept on a seat behind me seemed to be genuinely homeless. They had too many bags and seemed a little too much at home, not looking forward to anything.

§

Public parks in Manchester are improving both in safety and facilities. There are many new play areas built for young children. The physical ability of human beings always amazes me whenever I see very young children climb the equipments in one of these play areas, some of which must be twice their height or more. These facilities are either developed or redeveloped since 1994. There are now 58 play areas, namely Alderman Rodgers Park, Alexandra Park, Ancoats, Barrack Park, Bradford Park, Brookdale Park, Chapel Street Park, Cheetham Park, Chesterton Road, Chorlton Park, Chorlton Water Park, Claton Park, Cringle Fields, Crowcroft Park, Crumpsall Park, Culmere Road, Danson Street, David Lewis Recreation Ground, Debdale Park, Delamere Park, Didsbury Park, Douro Street, Fog Lane Park, Gorton Park, Heaton Park Grand Lodge, Greenbank Park, Haveley Park, Heristone Road Park, Hewlett Park, Hollyhedge Park, Hulme Park, Iron Street, Irk Valley Estate, Kingswood Road Park, Kirkup Gardens, Kirkhaven Green, Lightbowne Fun Play Area, Manley Park, Medlock Play Area, Milky Button Play Area, Moss Side Green, Moss Side Park, Nuthurst Road Park, Old Moat Park, Painswick Park, Philips Park, Plant Hill Park, Platt Fields Park, Queens Park, Rosebery Street, Heaton Park St Margarets, Scotland Hall Road, Smeaton Street, Smedley Playing Fields, Southwick Road, Sunnybrow Park, Victoria Mill Park, and Wythenshawe Park.

The Spring of 2001 is here. Manchester is still going ahead in full steam. The second runway of the Manchester Airport was opened in February. It is three kilometres long, built by AMEC-Carillion and costed £172 million.

The sunken garden at Piccadilly Gardens has been filled in, and a new garden is being build which is designed by Tadao Ando. There will also be an office and restaurant building. The aim is to regenerate the garden and bring it and the city together.

The plan is a good one in that the bus and metro stations will be separated from the garden by a pavilion building. A catwalk bridge will direct people from the other side of the garden through a fountain plaza towards an opening in the wall which immediately opens on to the stations. There will be a new Visitor Centre in the Millennium Quarter. Market Street will be refurbished and paved in a £2.2 million package.

Kit the Kat is launched as the mascot for the 17^{th} Commonwealth Games. East Manchester is about to be regenerated. The City of Manchester Stadium is taking shape under Laing. It is funded by Manchester City Council and Sport England. When finished there will be eight spiral pedestrian access ramps on both sides of it, like eight spring tautly coiled, about to shoot eight arrows up towards heaven.

While the Belle Vue Leisure Centre is undergoing redevelopment, the Bolton Arena which is to host the Badminton events has already been completed and

opened to the public.

During the Games, TVNZ will broadcast to New Zealand and the Pacific islands, namely Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Samoa and Tonga; ABC will broadcast to Australia.

A new hall of residence is currently being built for the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) under the Private Finance Initiative, and will have 600 rooms when finished. The Higher Education Funding Council wants to make it a pathfinder project which will be used as a model for future halls of residence across the country. Jarvis University Partnerships Programme carries out this work, funded by Abbey National Treasury Services, which has the initial cost of £22 million.

The City Art Gallery expansion project has obtained £15 million from the Heritage Lottery, towards the total cost of £25 million. The £29 million Urbis Centre designed by Ian Simpson Architects is being built by Laing. Harvey Nicholsis is under construction opposite Marks & Spencer, at £24 million.

§

I now live at the flat AD12 of Grosvenor Place, M1 7HR. This is my longest residence in the UK. I have lived here since September 2000, and it has been nearly one year already.

Accommodation is rather difficult to find now. It will not be as difficult after the coming Commonwealth Games. As it is, I could only managed to find a place at the Sir Charles Groves Hall of Residence, which is being built at the moment. It is going to be next door to the Royal Northern College of Music. It is to be a pilot model for the future privatised university accommodation, the first one of its kind.

Belonging to Jarvis, however, it makes you think twice before deciding to live there, since the Student Village, which also belongs to the company, is not very well reputed. The street occupied by the Student Village was until recently rather dubious. It is also close to the Manchester Metropolitan University and all. At a roundabout not far away from there I was nearly mugged once in 1995, when I had to run up the slope to where the traffic is and then jump on to the road.

I know the name Sir Charles Groves because of the authoritative Groves' Dictionary of Music. Even an old version that Ben has are already marvellous.

I want to know what it is like to live in a cubicle. It is built by stacking ready-made blocks of rooms on top of one another. There is probably a steel structure which holds these units loosely together.

I have put most of my belongings in my lockers in the rooms C62 and B9 at the university. I am going to go back to Daiï soon, and will only move into

the new place when I come back.

On the last night at Grosvenor Place we have a party where Dmitris brought Ouso and I smoke my first cigarette in five years. I find myself still able to smoke to my heart's content the same way I used to do, but no longer want to come back to it again afterwards, which proves the magic of my departure from cigarettes genuine.

Next day is the last day, and I am the last one to move out. Dave had moved out nearly a week ago. Since he only moved in towards the end of our stay, I hardly know him except that he studies laser engineering and that his father is a retired astronomer who used to work at the Max Planck Institut in Germany.

On the day he moved out I met his father. He knew that I wanted to work in Astronomy, so he knocked on my door to introduce me to his dad. I showed him Fred Hoyle's book *Home is where the wind blows* and we talked for a while. He said, 'I agree with his steady state theory. There must be a flaw somewhere that we still do not know yet. The universe can't just come out of nothing.'

The cleaning lady give me some of the cooking utensils which are left behind. I make many pizzas again. When night comes, I return the key to the porter. Out at the gate, another porter looks in at the huge open rubbish container that has to be lifted by a truck, for things which should not have been thrown away. He shows me to a couple of things and says that I should take them if I wish, it would be a waste if they were to be thrown away. I duly take a Chinese dictionary which I like, and which I know he would not need.

I stay in the computer cluster the whole night, and in the morning lug my suitcase and luggage on my trolley to the Piccadilly Square where I get on a bus to go to the airport. I fly to Daiï and stay there seventeen days.

I arrive *Ɗaunmuang* to find out that my big suitcase has been damaged because I had put in it too many books, withdrawn music books given away by the RNCM.

The following day when they bomb the World Trade Center I am riding on a bus in *Ḅạngrak*, when the siren of a fire brigade sounds, dashes past us towards the right before coming back again and then overtakes us. But I do not know about the incident until more than one hour later when my mother calls from *Jiangmăị* to tell me to turn on the television. Then we exchange short calls back and forth a few times when I said, 'Let's pray there will be no war!'

Two days later, on 13$^{\text{th}}$ September 2001, I had one of my molar teeth root-treated for the first time. To have a tooth root-treated is essentially to have it killed. The nerves are taken out, and the tooth will never feel anything again. And since the nervous systems are all wired up and linked, who knows

what happens in the roots will not affect anything else down the line.

When I visit *Jiangmăị* I swim everyday. When I board the plane in Bạngkauk after my vacation, for the first time my pocket knife with its two-inch razor-sharp blade is taken away on custody.

The air hostess says, 'We will look after your weapon for you,' and I thank her. Months after the bombing of the World Trade, nobody is to complain however he is delayed by the procedure at the airport.

I cannot help thinking that terrorists seem to bomb only ugly buildings. When I was in New York in August 1997, I looked up at the buildings for a long time. They were so tall I had to be seated and recline myself in order to do so. I was making up my mind whether to take a photo of them. In the end I did not. They were ugly I thought, 'Look like two boxes.'

The IRA bomb in Manchester the same year was also targeted at an exceedingly ugly building, the Arndale Centre. Manchester shrank and shrank after its heyday until everything retreated into the Arndale Centre. It became the only surviving shopping area where the shops were not too quiet but way busier than elsewhere.

I do not know whether it was the bomb that triggered more beautiful things to come up to challenge Uncle Arndale, or whether it was the Labour government that influence the regeneration of the city. Anyway, regeneration it is, and a marvellous one too.

This was the home of industries and the origin of the labour movement. No wonder whenever Conservative Party rules, Manchester will be left to fall into ruin. But it rises again like a phoenix. The Commonwealth Games is a strategic move on Tony Blair's part. Even more so is to make Manchester a gateway that bridges the United Kingdom and the European Union. Nowhere else in the whole country is qualified. Historically, this is the origin of the computer and the seat of industry, labour, and co-operative movements.

Workers in Victorian times pushed for the right to have half a holiday on Saturday. Even nowadays, there are still companies which require their employees to work half a day on Saturday. A relic of this can be seen in the movie, not such a long time ago, the *Saturday's Night Fever.* Delights were on Saturday nights which are now usually on Friday nights. From April until October 2001 the Pump House People's History Museum have an exhibition 'All our Saturdays.' A part of the exhibition is about Belle Vue, a somewhat barren ground now to the southeast, which you reach first when you go to Gorton. There used to be among other things a zoo there where there was a huge African bull-elephant.

§

It has been nearly two weeks since the bombing in New York. America has

been looking for allies in its attack on Afghanistan. Nobody around there likes the Taliban. It is only the question of who hate the Taliban more than the U.S. Pakistan is still thinking whether to allow U.S. ground troop to mount the attack from there. The latter would need its help because it has half of Afghanistan's border. Iran sticks to the U.N. as usual.

Apart from commonplace celebrity news, the newspapers in the U. K. are interesting. You can read through them for hours without getting bored.

Sénégal which used to be colonial to France and which gained its independence in 1960 has its football team won an opening match against France and so in June 2002 '*France est élim*' becomes the slogan for the people in Sénégal, it entered the World Cup while France was dropped out. There is a mass slaughter of chickens for the cockerel has been defeated by the Lions, and public holidays have been announced for three days. The country is still very poor and Dakar, its capital city, looks like a big open market.

A man called Dudley Higgins from Jamaica and arrested by the West Midlands police was convicted for a post office robbery. In jail he met Mark Vendryes who had done the robbery. In fact he had done it twice and got caught in the second time.

In England and Wales since 1985, the Crown Prosecution Service prosecutes people who have been charged with a criminal offence by the police. Before 1880, people employed their own lawyers to bring criminal cases to court. Around the end of the 19^{th} century the police forces, then newly created, employed lawyers to bring cases to court for them. In the 20^{th} century when some police forces set up their internal departments of prosecuting solicitors, the public criticised the police for both investigating and prosecuting cases. The Royal Commission decided in 1981 that the police be the one who investigates, but there should be a separate Service which handles the prosecution.

§

I move into Sir Charles Grove on Thursday 27^{th} September. The flat I move into is E4-2A. The construction works are still going on in force. The courtyard in the middle is still unpaved, the concert stage there is still not raised, and the lifts are not yet installed. I arrive from the airport and lie down on a sofa waiting for the key into my room.

There is to be no lift for the next few months during the same period of which the courtyard is painted and then paved, and huge foam blocks are installed under the stage and synthetic grass spread over them. During this time I never know my way around the courtyard; one day it is this way, the next day it is another. I climb up and down the stairs to the fourth floor several times a day.

§

My present accommodation has 612 rooms, 160 of which are reserved for students of the Royal Northern College of Music. It is run by the University Partnership Programme, and is managed by Jarvis Workplace Facilities Management.

My room is a disabled room, which makes it wider than the rest. There would have been room enough to put a baby grand piano in. The toilet is quite large inside and there is a seat under the shower. There are two disabled alarms, one in the room and the other one in the toilet. In the shared kitchen there is another alarm. When I first moved in I thought they were switches for the lights. I pulled one of them and that set the alarm off. I tried several buttons but none of them would turn off the alarm. In the end I found the circuit breakers above the door, so I pulled it down and that stopped short the alarm. Later I found out how to turn the alarm off. You need to press two of the buttons at once.

Rob was already here when I moved in. He studies Physics at the University of Manchester where he does a PhD in Quantum Mechanics. At the beginning he enjoyed the night life in Manchester greatly, but as the study gets more difficult he gradually stopped. Now he lives on baked beans on toasts while writing papers until the small hours everyday, and once went to a conference in America where he said he enjoyed the night life again.

Aspasia was the third person to move into our flat. 'My name is the name of a courtesan in the past,' she said. She is doing a PhD on gypsies in Greek. She studies sociology and has parties every week, sometimes every other day.

'Oh, Gosh! I need to finish writing a conference paper tonight,' she said one night, somewhat proudly.

'What is it about?', I asked.

'Gypsy dancing,' was the answer.

'Gypsy dancing,' I repeated to myself, 'Dionysus!'

'No Dionysus! I am not going to mention anything about Dionysus. It has got nothing to do with Gypsy dancing.'

'Not even in the introduction?', I asked.

Then, 'How can you do a research on dancing and not mention the dancing spirit of the Zulus, let alone Bacchus?'

'Because I don't like Dionysus. That's why,' she raised her voice.

'But it is an important fact in the history. You can't possibly ignore such huge facts. That would not be an objective research.'

She seemed crossed and said, 'I do not believe in object researches. A

research can never be objective because objectivity never exists.'

'But I believe that it exists,' I said, 'And even if they did not, the fact that you have at least strived towards it would have been enough already.'

§

When I flew to Manchester on the Singapore Airline we stopped at the Changi Airport for transit. There are two terminals. The departure transit level there is like a world of its own. There are food, drinks, films and televisions for sports, news, cartoons or discovery. There are transfer lounges, hotels, and a swimming pool. And there is a free tour of the city if your transit is longer than five hours.

There is a train connecting the two terminals, but they are not that far from each other and you could walk from one to the other along a corridor. Interestingly there are bamboo-, cactus- and orchid gardens, and there is a Koi pond. Koi is the Japanese name for the fancy carp. A homonym of this word means *love* in the Japanese language.

The Cactus Garden is really a garden. It is outside and on the upper floor. There is a bar selling drinks and people can smoke here. The air suddenly becomes humid on going outside, not unlike that in Cairns, Australia. There are more than ten different cactuses.

Man must live with nature, even in Singapore where the lands are limited. Here there is the Sungei Buloh Nature Park where you can see migrating birds from Siberia every year between September and March.

§

We never take time to write down soon enough very big events of the world because they seem so big when they are still present, that we never dream we will ever forget them. But as time passes by, life goes on and we forget everything those things we never have dreamt before we would forget. Anyway, history is just history.

America is bombing Afghanistan in order to catch Bin Laden death or alive, preferably the former. Blair is lobbying countries all around to persuade them that this attack is justified. 'Al-Qaeda must go. After this we will be busy reconstructing Afghanistan anew,' this is how the promises run. When the former has really gone, there would be no one who remember this promise anyway. Or even if we happen in the future to come across newspaper cuttings of this time, or to read something about such promises unfulfilled, it would not matter anyway since everything would have been much dampened out by time and later events in the course of history. But it is always good to see someone who shows the right attitude and at least not be too arrogant.

'Before he became the president,' Aspasia said one day, 'he answered, when asked by a reporter, that he did not know whom the prime minister of Pakistan was.'

'That was someone who is now the leader of the world,' she concluded.

Bush is by no means the only one among the American population who never condescend to learn something about the rest of the world. A news reporter in the US once ended his report with, 'Cardiff, England.' Well, Cardiff is in reality the capital of Wales.

If I were a Muslim, I would live in England never in America. May be it is because the Church of England had also been repressed before, by the Catholic Church, they generally have good will towards Muslims who love peace and who are not arrogant. The media here thus say that Al-Qaeda must be busted but not bombed.

§

The second time I bought the Megarider ticket was on Monday 6$^{\text{th}}$ May. I took the bus number 85 in the morning from in front of the Sir Charles Groves hall of residence to Piccadilly Garden and then took number 41 to Sale. The bus passed through the Mersey Valley.

Here on both sides of the road the trees grow so dense that they meet one another at the top to form a ceiling of branches above the bus, which makes you feel like driving through a tunnel. The bus came out from this tunnel into Sale, where the raised footpaths on both sides are wide, which makes it looks like the streets in America.

Stockport is a town in the southeastern region of the Greater Manchester. It marks the border between the city and the countryside. The bus station here received in 1984 an award for being the best kept station.

The station is situated in a nice spot on the high bank of the River Mersey. But you cannot easily see the river from the stands because there are many trees.

Nearby is the Hat Museum and the public library is only five minutes away on foot. From the Stockport station you can take a bus to Hayfield in the Peak District national park and outside Manchester.

Not far from Stockport is the Offerton Estate, a residential village which looks out on to the countryside and open fields behind it that stretch all the way towards the mountains in the distance. From Stockport you can take a local bus to nearby places like Bosden Farm, Romiley where the road winds its way through hills, or to places as further away as Bolton which is on the other side of Manchester.

Using the Megarider ticket Stockport becomes my paradise since there are

always plenty of buses here even on Sunday and bank holidays. Also, most of the buses here are Stagecoach Manchester buses, and the ticket I mentioned is only valid on them.

On Wednesday I come here again an catch the number 22 bus to go to Bolton. Number 22 buses are run by two different companies. The one I got on is not run by Stagecoach Manchester but the driver said it was all right.

The bus is a double-decker and I sit on the upper deck. It takes more than one hour on the bus to go to Bolton. We stop for ten minutes at the Trafford Centre.

In Bolton I walk around but finally end up in the Bolton Art Gallery. After the gallery I get on another bus and after one hour find myself in Preston which is outside Manchester and for which my ticket is not valid. There is another free-ride ticket for a day which costs the same as my ticket does for a week. I think that the driver did not look at my ticket carefully, and I did not know; I thought Preston was also in Greater Manchester. I should have known since it is a very long ride from Bolton to Preston.

From Preston there are buses to Blackpool and Lake District. But it is already late in the afternoon and it would be hours to go to Blackpool and back, let alone to go to the Lake District, so I decide to take the same bus to go back to Bolton. It is now that the driver tells me that I am not supposed to come here on my ticket, but since I tell him that the first driver let me get on the other bus, this second driver lets me ride on his bus back to the other end of the line as a second wrong which rights the first.

River Tame and River Goyt meet each other at Stockport to form River Mersey which runs all the way through the southern part of Manchester, where it forms the Mersey Valley, to Liverpool, where it forms the Mersey Estuary. Fifteen years ago they were regarded as one of the most polluted river systems in Europe. Today it becomes an asset of North West England. The Mersey Basin Campaign was set up in 1985, and in 1995 the University of Liverpool completed the management plan for the Mersey Estuary. Since then fish like chub, dab, dace, dogfish, flounder, mackerel, plaice, roach and tope have been coming back.

On the bank of River Goyt to the west of Stockport are the Vernon Park and the Woodbank Memorial Park. These are wonderful, considering that they are very close to a city. There are a few trails, for example the Valley Way and the Midshire Way.

The bus number 458 which says Birchhill Circle takes me to Wardle, a nice and small town. It looks like there is a senior ball at the Wardle High School today. Students are all dressed up, one girl dresses in an evening dress which has only one shoulder.

Shop names are sometimes quite imaginative and interesting to read. Thus *Pressing Matter* is a cloth pressing shop and *How Bazaar* a restaurant in

Manchester.

Here in Manchester the Mersey Valley Countryside Warden Service manages close to 40 sites on the Mersey Valley from Didsbury to Flixton. The Chorlton Water Park is one of these which, together with the Sale Water Park a kilometre downstream, was excavated for gravel to build the M63 motorway.

The area has footpaths and bridle-ways. You could do orienteering here and at the lake you can canoe, windsurf, and sail with permits obtainable from the wardens, or angle for Bream, Carp, Perch, Pike, Roach, and Tench. The water is up to five metres deep.

The Mersey Valley lies along the Trans-Pennine corridor which stretches from Liverpool on the west coast to Hull on the east coast. This is a trade corridor which links everything from Ireland to Germany to the former eastern European countries, resulting in Manchester having 21 per cent of national GDP with its 12 million population. But more than forty per cent of investments in Manchester comes from North America, with the European Union coming second just below forty per cent.

There are flood basins along the River Mersey, for example the Ees flood basin in Sale. The name *Sale* is pronounced as though its last vowel has an acute accent on top.

These basins are flooded whenever the level of water in the river is becoming too high. Farmers also used to flood their farms, as recently as the 1950s that is. When the first flood came, the sluice gate was never opened as it brought rubbish. The second flood was different because it brought rich mud.

From Manchester the river Mersey runs into north Cheshire where the Mersey estuary begins. In the upper estuary the river is narrow but expands greatly once it has passed Runcorn where the last bridge, the Runcorn Bridge, is situated.

The river is at its widest point at Speke where there is the half-timbered Elizabethan Speke Hall. Three miles away on the opposite bank of the Hall is the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port. There are several country parks around this area and birdwatchers may see dunlin, knot, redshank, buzzards, peregrine falcons and kestrels. This is the heart of the estuary.

Further down the river you will come to Liverpool where there are ferries linking Pier Head with Seacombe and Birkenhead on the opposite bank. The Albert Dock in Liverpool is the home of a Tate gallery but also has the darker side of its past linked with trading of slaves to America.

There are four Tate galleries–Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London, Tate Liverpool, and Tate St Ives. Tate Gallery in London became Tate Britain in March 2000. In May the same year Tate Modern opened which is designed by Herzog and De Meuron. Tate Liverpool displays modern art in a nineteenth-century warehouse at Albert Dock which has been converted

by James Stirling and Michael Wilford. Tate St Ives has a great view of the ocean, and displays twentieth century art.

Wirral coast links the Mersey Estuary with the Dee Estuary. The Hilbre Islands off the shore on the mouth of the Dee River is accessible during low tides and is a mile's walk from the coast. On the island there is a colony of seals.

There are three museums which are related to the canals of Britain. The Boat Museum just mentioned is one. The other two are the Canal Museum in Stoke Bruerne and the National Waterways Museum in Gloucester Docks.

Manchester sits between two national parks. To the north is the Lake District, and to the south the Peak District. Between these two the Lake District is more famous, partly because of the grandeur of its mountains, partly because of the names of poets like Wordsworth. While the Peak District contains highlands and moors like the Kinder Scout peak, the Lake District has forests and lakes, for example the Windermere lake.

In the Peak District national park there is a town called Rowsley where there is a Victorian mill that is still working. The Caudwell's Mill was built in 1874 by John Caudwell. It is powered by two water turbines, one installed in 1898, the other one in 1914. The former is the smaller one and is now used to power the provender mill.

§

When I was here in 1994 I banked at Barclay. When I came back in 2000 I found that I could not open an account at Barclay before I registered, so I put my money into National Westminster instead.

The Royal Bank of Scotland then gave interest rates which are higher than other banks, and Dirk saved his money there. The bank was established in 1727 and during the 18^{th} century worked only within Scotland. In 1814 it had its first branch in London. In 2000 it took over the NatWest group. In Europe, it is only second to HSBC in terms of Market Capitalisation. Next to it are respectively Lloyds TSB, UBS, Barclays, HBOS, Credit Suisse, BNP Paribas, and Deutsche Bank.

There is a big Italian community here. The Italian Festival in Manchester comes two days before the Queen's golden jubilee.

The flag-throwers, *sbandieratori* in Italian, from Alba in the Piemonte province around Turin who performed here last year are back again. Their uniform is still red and white, but it looks more beautiful this year. The region in Italy where they come from is famous for the barolo wine.

They perform many times on both occasions, the festival and the jubilee. They play with side-drums and trumpets.

The flags are almost as wide as the poles, and the poles are nearly six feet long. Before a throw the thrower runs one hand loosely down the pole, and thus pulling the flag together. Then the other hand which holds the handle shoots the flag up in the air like a dart. The flag spreads in the air and effectively controls the speed and direction of the pole after it has reached its highest point. Sometimes they stand in a circle and throw the flags at the same time to a partner who stands on the opposite side.

Apart from the Italian festival there is also an Irish festival each year in March to celebrate the St Patrick's Day. In 2001 it is the sixth festival. There is a big community of Irish and Italian people in Manchester.

The Jubilee on Monday 3^{rd} June 2002 is a bank holiday. There are festivals going on at the same time in Albert Square, Exchange Square, St Ann's Square and St Ann's Street.

I watch flag throwers perform at Exchange Square. Here BBC has put up a huge screen to show live music and broadcast events going on at Buckingham Palace.

At Cathedral Gardens there are performances by Tashi Lhunpo or Tibetan monks. When I take pictures, a big man ask me where I am from. I think he thinks that I may come from China. It could be that the Chinese government does not like Lamas preaching their religion and thus culture.

The Feast of Delights Parade is organised by Asda, the American Supermarket chain. It starts from Corporation Street and passes along Cross St, St Ann St, Deansgate, John Dalton St, and ends in Albert Square. Around 2,000 people from more than 60 different groups take part. The flag throwers are here again, and I follow them up and down the streets even though it drizzles most of the time.

At UMIST I am one of the six postgraduate student representatives in the Graduate School Council which was established since August 1994, just one month before I began my M.Sc. course. My term is six months, from December 2001 until June 2002.

There are meetings about once a month. I almost always have something to say in each meeting. But I guess I am never good at convincing people to do what I say, and my thoughts are nearly never followed. I wonder why they selected me in the first place. Would it not be better to hold meetings without inviting me to join in, if no one is going to heed me anyway?

They plan to remove master degree's dissertations from the Joule Library, instead of trying to find a way to increase the storage space there. If you do not value the works you produce, then you cannot expect the rest of the world to value your graduates. And if your dissertation is anything short of a masterpiece, then it is your education system that is at fault and needs improvement.

I am also a member of the Library Services Sub-committee which meet irregularly. Our library at UMIST is called the Joule Library. It is a small library and therefore does not attract national funding like the lottery fund. Ours is an institute of technology so the books in the library are mostly only those in Engineering.

The committee plans to get rid of old books from the store room, and I try to convince them against this but to no avail. I say something in every one of our meetings, but have come to realise that we student representatives are only there as a decoration. None of the ideas that I suggested has been carried out. For instance, the outer door of one of the men's toilets in the library has no handle. There is a hole in the door panel where the lock used to be, into which you have to put your finger in order to pull the door open. As the door is quite heavy, it is not good for your finger. And if someone on the outside of the toilet should push at the door when you have just put your finger into the hole you could hurt your finger.

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On the fourth of June the year 2002 I went for a walk which started from the Platt Fields park and ended walking from the new Millennium Stadium along the Ashton Canal, passed the Cheshire Ring Canal Walk to the new flats along both sides of the Ashton Canal past the Great Ancoats Street to the Piccadilly Station. I bought some cookies from the supermarket KwikSave before I reached Platt Fields from home. There were only a few people there, both at the supermarket and at the park.

I crossed the Wilmslow road to the Danes road and veered off into a path towards the right at the end of the latter. There is another path which traverses the playing field just behind the university sport hall towards the Birchfields Primary School, but it was closed for the moment. A gate shut it off with the sign saying that it was closed because the path condition was bad.

Some people do get up early and go for a walk. Even on the second and last day of the Queen's golden jubilee on the throne like today I saw a few people already jogging or walking dogs.

Yesterday there was a big festival in the city to mark the occasion. There was a big procession in the afternoon which started from the Victoria station and wound its way here and there to finish in front of the town hall.

Amidst the drizzle the flag throwers team from Italy attracted me throughout the whole day, but quite a few other groups in the procession were ingeniously dressed or gave ideas funny to look at.

I went back to the Sir Charles Groves hall of residence where I lived to rest. My flat mate Ash was antisocial again by smoking marijuana in the corridor.

So I went to sleep just to wake up too late to catch the flag throwers' last performance of the day at the Cathedral Garden.

I went along the Mosley Road then the Albert Road and then the Stockport Road. There the surrounding does not look very safe and there is a residential area on the east of the Stockport Road which you would not have liked to walk in to because it looks like a strong hold, pretty much similar but to a lesser degree to what Moss Side did in 1994 before they pulled all the buildings down and replaced them with normal residential buildings or better, effectively rubbing a less graceful history off the area. Most of the windows there are barred.

I chose a small side way that looks reasonably safe to cut across to the Broom Lane. From there it is not far to the beginning of the path which follows the Fallowfield Brook. I saw two backhoes, one working on the bed of the brook and the other parked on a bridge nearby. They must be trying to turn it into a road or something, because the surface they cleared looks a little too wide for the bed of a water course.

I cut across a piece of land where there is an ugly rubbish dump ground as well as tall beautiful rustling trees towards the Holmcroft Road. Here the sign in front of a high school does not say *St Albans* as it does on my map. Also everywhere but especially around here there were many flags hanging from windows, the Union Jack and the English flag which is essentially a red cross on white.

I walked, following a path whenever possible or else a road, to the Gorton Reservoir. Here I have a memory where one summer day in 1995 Clare or Clara, Asim and I sat talking.

Clare used to live close by, and we used to visit her weekly following our looking after her on a trip to Cornwall organised by John who is the manager of the Community Action at UMIST. She would tell us about her life and fed me with KitKat, and we would go for a walk to the lake, the Gorton Reservoir, if it is a nice day.

One day I painted the small room under the stairs in white for her. Afterwards we sat and had some tea at the table in the kitchen, and then moved to the back lawn and sat in the sun. The grass was getting a bit long but looked so green I could not resist doing some somersault and then lay down on my back.

Clare could see light and movements but not faces. Since her second husband died she has been registered as blind.

When I came back to Manchester again last year I walked past her place on Havers Road, but there was a sign saying that it was for sale. I then wrote to Alison her grand daughter, and she replied to me at the Grosvenor Place and said that her grand mother has moved to a home for elderly people called the April Park in Derbyshire.

There are many public footpath in England but camping can be more difficult than in many other countries. Most of the lands here are privately owned.

On that day the weather was nice and so we sent for a walk to the reservoir. Manchester was not as safe in 1995 as it is in now, there were always news of people being mugged on the Oxford Road and elderly people robbed both in their homes and on the street, so I was always anxious wherever I walked then. This is probably one of the reasons why people always keep dogs, especially those who live in Gorton. The practice which has carried on to today when the city has gotten much safer to live in.

We sat talking for a while. There were children jumping from the platform which juts out into the lake. I related what went on around us to Clare as she could not see well. Then she said that she could sit there on her own and that Asim and I should go for a walk along the path by the side of the reservoir.

There were quite a few gentle people around walking with or without their dogs and it looked quite safe, so we went for a walk for about fifteen minutes. I remember the path was a bit narrow at one point, there were some prickly brambles about and some climbing up and down.

In the end I think we went to the furthest tip of the reservoir but presumably the golf course there was much more closed to the public back then and there was no way we could enter it, so we came back to Clare was sitting the way we went and could never manage to walk right around the lake.

But today it was different for the path was much wider and neither the steep, narrow path nor the brambles were nowhere to be found. Moreover this time I could cut across the golf course, climbed over the neck-high masonry wall with the suggestion of the golfers, into King's Road which was also a part of the Tameside Trail. I caught a glimpse of the Audenshaw Reservoirs from atop the flyover where the Audenshaw Road goes over the new extension to the motorway M60.

Unlike the Gorton reservoir which I think is more for recreation and agriculture, the Audenshaw reservoirs seem to be for water supply. Therefore they are out of bound to the public and there are signs which say that it is on a private ground. That does not worry me much because to me it looks ugly anyway. It looks like a dam with clear-cut paved steep bank and no beaches or any plant. Having a few times more surface area than the Gorton reservoir it is much less well known. I think I now know the reason why. The water table must be more than 30 feet or some ten metres above the M60 motorway, which makes it near totally hidden from the eyes. You have to be on top of the flyover I mentioned to see it.

I walked along the southern bank of the Ashton Canal. It is a dug canal. On the bank opposite to where I was there are houses with their backs bordering

the canal. I thought to myself that this is why they advertised, 'This is not Venice, this is Manchester'.

It looked so serene. There were people angling and water birds of the duck family cruising about. I walked towards the east passing quite a few people along the way, some with their dogs, some jogging or cycling.

Just past underneath the extension to the M60 there was a red car submerged in the water of the canal. On the opposite bank behind it there were two trails on the grass leading up to the motorway.

Obviously enough the car came down that way along those trails after having left the road. Once in the water it went further and hit the stones which line the side of the canal. The windscreen is shattered and the car radio came off and floated up just underneath it. The length of the car is more than half the width of the canal. I never found out whether it was an accident or a ridding of a stolen car. One moment ago I was on a flyover above the M60, now I am on the bank of a canal below it.

On the opposite bank as I walked further there are old mills. There are the Junction Mill, the Tudor Mill built in 1905, and the Cavendish Mill which was built in 1884 with its fire proof concrete floor. It was closed down in 1934 and was turned into flats in 1994.

The Ashton canal branches to the right when passing these mill, and goes over the river Tame which runs some forty feet below it. It is wonderful to see a canal going over a river. The roman ducts in the past must have been something similar.

I have been coming from the direction of Droylsden and Manchester, turning right will lead me to Marple, Whaley Bridge, and Macclesfield, and if I carry on along the path I will reach Huddersfield and Narrow Canal. I turned right and walked along the Peak Forest Canal. These canals were used for barges carrying cotton from farms to the mills and from there on to Manchester where there was a ship canal and piers to accommodate ships coming from the ocean.

When people built things like canals they might have thought that it was to be used forever. But then, how many years were they actually used? In the case of the ship canal about fifty. Would they have built it then if they knew it was going to be abandoned after only fifty years of use? Somehow this brings to my mind what Fred Hoyle wrote in his book *Home is Where the Wind Blow* that on his death bed his father asked him, 'How long is the journey?'.

There was a stone raised on the side of the path at the point where the canal ran parallel to the river, on the direction of the river, for one lady called Mary Moffat (1795–1871) who was an African missionary and who had inspired someone with the name David Livingstone.

The canal and the river gradually diverge. I branched off to the right at one point, heading towards the river. The air was so fresh and clean when I reached the opening where there were a green field of grass, a marsh and trees rustling. At the river there is an old steel bridge with low but wide truss works on either side where you could sit dangling your feet and look at the river below. Three kids with a bicycle sat chatting with one another five yards away from me. None of us dangled his feet out over the river some twenty feet below.

I walked along until I reached the Manchester Road. At the entrance there is a sign with the name Jet Amber Fields written. From there I walked a little further along the road and then reentered the Tame valley and treaded my way back until I reached the Gorton reservoir, passing a cemetery along the way on my left.

From there until the Gorton Station and then traversing Openshaw the surrounding feels less safe. You can feel the anxiety of people when they are outside their home. Public properties are not well looked after and the windows have bars. People feel suspicious walking pass you as you do walking pass them.

I reached the Ashton canal again, then walked along it westward until I reached the Alan Turing road on the opposite side of which the Millennium stadium for the upcoming Common Wealth games is being built. There on the left was another brand new Asda, one of the American supermarkets in the chain of that name.

Asda's keep a very complete stock of goods and food. There policy for the location of their new stores seems to follow only one idea, that is to be as close to the most conspicuous places as possible. For example, there is another Asda in Rochdale where you could walk to from the Rochdale station and city centre.

On the other hand Tesco, a British supermarket chain, uses what they call the *porcupine diagrams* to help finding a good location for their new stores. These diagrams look like stars with radiating rays whose length represent the drive time required to reach the supermarket from various places.

It may be because of this that Tesco tends to put their supermarkets in strategic places instead of putting them in the most obvious or busiest ones as is the case with Asda. Tesco in Daiï joins force with the local Lotus and uses the name of the latter. There strategy over there is similar to here. A good example is their new supermarket at *Taopụn* in Ḅạngkauk which was opened less than a year ago.

Another supermarket chain is Aldi from Germany. It has common sense as its strategy, and the consistency in the appearance of its stores is most admirable.

I once saw a newly opened Aldi while sitting on a double-decker on my

way from Didsbury to Manchester after having just been to a Tesco in East Didsbury with its beautiful building, and decided to jump off the bus to have a look. From East Didsbury you could easily walk to the River Mersey and from there follow the path along its bank to Stockport. There are a few places where you need to leave the path for a while and walk on a road instead.

The new Aldi is on the Wilmslow Road. The one closest to the university is on the Great Western Street in Rusholme. This is a street which branches of either from the Oxford Road or the Wilmslow Road because that stretch of the road belongs to the former in one map while belongs to the latter in another.

Another Aldi, on Refuge Street in Shaw, is also exactly the same as these two. Early on in 2002 they renovated the stores and put in new tillers. Starting from March 2002 the receipts are bigger and descriptive, instead of the previous terse ones.

After I entered the supermarket I had to run back to the entrance to peer out through the double automatic doors to make sure that it was not the one in Rusholme where I always go to. The consistency of products of the Germans is simply marvellous. Everything looks exactly the same! Not only the building and the door, but also the layout of the inside and the number of the tills, their positions, even the things put on the shelves are the same and in exactly the same position. It was quite an extraordinary experience, and is one I am unlikely to forget.

An Aldi supermarket looks essentially like a box which is divided by half the one part of which is a store for stocking goods while and the other the supermarket. You enter it through two automatic doors, one opening while the other is closing, on the side at the far end opposite to the store part. Similarly you leave it through a pair of automatic doors, except that this time they are at right angle instead of being in the same direction with each other.

Later I was to find out that the interior of the Aldi store in Buxton also looks exactly the same as elsewhere. The only differences are that the doors here are of sliding type where two panes meet in the middle, and there are fifty per cent more vegetable. Buxton is in the Peak District national park and I went there with students of the English classes at the University of Manchester in July.

Last night there was a party at St Gabriel, so *Shūhei* was sleeping on the coach when we came to Buxton this morning. It is a pity because we passed some fine scenery in the northern part of the Peak District after Stockport.

From the car park I walk to the Poole's Cavern with a group of Japanese- and Spanish students. I do not want to go into the caves, so I find my way to the Solomon Temple on the hill top overlooking the town and have my lunch there.

Inside the cave it is said to be a constant seven degrees Celsius throughout the year. It is a natural cave and so there are stalactites and stalagmites. Stone age cave-dwellers, Celts and Romans have all been here. The so-called *temple* is in fact only a low Victorian tower made possibly by mistake.

Caves are quite a normal sight in UK. There are the Blue John Cavern and the Peak Cavern in Castleton. Also in the Peak District is the Speedwell Cavern where there is a subterranean lake, the Bottomless Pit. These caves used to be coal mines. Some of the caves in the UK were used as Air Raid shelter during World War II, for example the Caves of Nottingham beneath the street of that city.

Other naturally occurred caves include the White Scar Caves in Yorkshire Dales National Park. It was discovered in 1923 by a student, Christopher Long. Inside there is the 200,000 year old Battlefield Cavern which is 330 feet long and a roof of up to 100 feet high.

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Manchester has greatly changed since 1996. When I did my master degree here in 1994–1995 the city had shrunk from its former glorious self in the 19th Century.

Back then when you talked about the Greater Manchester it made you feel like conceit, as though you were trying to make something seems what it was not. But now you can hardly feel any dividing line between the various districts of the Greater Manchester.

When I came here in September 1994 I first stayed at the Salford University. Everyday when I walked from Salford to UMIST I went from one town to another.

It could not be otherwise. The streets in between were very quiet you worried for your personal safety simply walking. Buildings were deserted or unoccupied. You never wanted to stray from the main roads, even these did not feel safe enough let alone the side streets and alleys.

I never saw the canals. Nobody went near them, let alone taking a leisure to walk along them. I did not know about the Roman remains and Castle Field. These must have been hidden inside the maze of deserted alleys I dared not penetrate.

By no means I was alone in this opinion. Most students I had met laughingly joked to one another, wondering why on earth they came here to study as, 'There's nothing here,' we usually said.

I met Sabrina in Daiï at a party a few months before coming to Manchester for the first time. When she told me that she was studying the piano at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester I asked her what the city was

like, and she said, 'It's very nice. I like it.' That gave me assurance.

One day in Manchester I met her with her piano teacher at her college, the RNCM. I often went there to use the library, which was then upstairs.

She introduced me to her teacher who then asked me why I chose to come to study in Manchester.

After hearing my reply, that it was Sabrina who told me this was a very nice city, she turned her eyes reproachingly at her saying, 'Did your really said that?'

'Why?', Sabrina said, 'I think it is a very nice city.'

I never comprehended why the name *Greater Manchester*, since to me different towns are different towns and there's no need to exaggerate or try to make something sound more important than it really was. Gorton was already another town, not to mention Bolton, Stockport or Altrincham.

But since the IRA bombing near the Arndale Centre in 1996, the city has been growing so quickly. No matter where you go now there are no broken lines of houses. Nowhere now is deserted as it used to be in 1995, and Manchester implies the Greater Manchester you no longer need to use the name.

Manchester was in its heyday in the 19^{th} century. Within three decades, from 1801 to 1831, its population increased from 77,000 to 187,000. Opposition to the Tories grew after the *Peterloo Massacre* where twelve protestors died.

The Reform Act passed in 1832 brought about home grown Member of Parliaments as well as more votes. The Manchester Anti-Corn Law Association, formed in 1838, led to the national Anti-Corn Law League and the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846 which removed the tax imposed on imported grain. Among the world's firsts, lending libraries was begun in 1852 in Campfield, Manchester.

There are 33 wards in Manchester, each elects three councillors. Each councillor serves for four years. The thirty-three wards are namely Ardwick, Baguley, Barlow Moor, Benchill, Beswick and Clayton, Blackley, Bradford, Brooklands, Burnage, Central, Charlestown, Cheetham, Chorlton, Crumpsall, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Gorton North, Gorton South, Harpurhey, Hulme, Levenshulme, Lightbowne, Longsight, Moss Side, Moston, Newton Heath, Northenden, Old Moat, Rusholme, Sharston, Whalley Range, Withington, and Wookhouse Park.

This means that Salford, Stockport, Rochdale, Bolton and other towns in the Greater Manchester are not among the wards and thus probably have their own city councils.

Where the Manchester Aquatics Centre now stands was in 1994 only a

grassy patch of ground. This and the Management School building next to it came up while I was away.

When I lived at the Grosvenor Place I did not realise at first that one could use the resident card to swim there. At a party at the St Peters House one evening I learnt about this from a German girl, and thereafter I went to swim every week.

We swam in the training pool, which is in the basement. The pools for public and competition are on the ground floor.

Once after my swim I watched a diving competition upstairs. Particularly good were the wining twins, small girls from China whose synchronisation seems so natural and covers every movements to the minutest details, not only during the diving but also while walking towards the end of the diving platform. Even their breathing was in tune.

After I have moved into the Sir Charles Grove I swam less often. And I went swimming once in November, three times in December, twice in January, once in February and again in May. It now costs one pound fifty with a student card.

I only realise now how often I have shopped at Kwik Save at Rusholme. Kwik Save belongs to Somerfield Store Limited whose head office is in Bristol. Before this I always bought my foods at Aldi, also in Rusholme, because it is closer to walk to and because it is cheaper than elsewhere.

I cannot say that I am well-to-do. It is enough for me to be able to live comfortably, if only I can do this I do not want to be rich. I live a simple life and cut everything down to the bare necessity. The foods that I buy tend to be the same things over and over again. I know it is not good for your health. I know it is necessary to have a wider range of diet, but it is difficult to change your habit.

I buy flour to bake bread and make pizzas. I have canned sardines with spaghetti and pastas. I have oats or cereals with milk, and I have Marmite on toast.

In New Zealand I remember that I never could eat Marmite, but now I just love it. Also, over there I think Marmite is always made from beef while Vegemite vegetables, but here the Marmite I eat is made from vegetables. Sometimes I make *okonomiyaki* in its simplest version and have this with mayonnaise.

Plain oats used to be much cheaper in 1994. Now it costs almost the same as other kinds of cereals, for instance Swiss muesli and cornflakes. Sterilised milk comes in paper cartons and does not taste as nice as pasteurised milk, which comes in plastic containers. The cheapest bread, from either Kwik Save or Aldi, costs 19 pence a pound. For bake beans, the cheapest is 9 pence. As for beans, I still prefer the Japanese nattou. No one knows how to cook

beans better than the Japanese and the Chinese.

Lamb is imported from New Zealand, and so are the Kiwi fruits. Frozen peas, cabbages, cucumber, tomatoes, mushrooms, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli and courgettes for the vegetables, pears, peaches, nectarines, strawberries, apples, oranges, and the Kiwi fruits for the fruits are among the items that appear in my shopping lists.

I only bought lamb from New Zealand once, that was on 21st January when I was living at the Sir Charles Grove Hall of Residence, and that was only because Dirk was coming over to visit and I knew he had lived in New Zealand. Then we forgot to cook it and as a result we only had coffee.

In this age of multimedia and telecommunication I use neither credit cards nor mobile phones. Mobile phone I had used when I was to Japan. It was called PHS, perhaps short for Personal Hand Set. The system is unique in Japan. You cannot use it anywhere else in the world. It is a very efficient system and when wrapped up the one that I used must have been about two inches wide and two and a half inches long.

In Manchester you can go anywhere by only following a canal. It is more amazing than Venice in that this is almost as inland as you could get anywhere on the British Isles. It is not on or in the sea like Venice where water is plenty.

All the canals here were dug and they are filled with fresh water. Locks are numerous and in one mile you can expect between ten to fifteen of them. Each one has two gates, one at each of its two ends, and is wide enough for a barge to enter one at a time. They work like stairs in the houses or steps and essentially use water pressure to raise or lower the ships or barges. Though both are filled with water, less amount of water is needed for the working of a canal than that of a river.

A canal with locks is like a river with dams. The difference lies in that there are less dams to a river than locks to a canal. Also a dam built for hydro-electricity have a higher head, that is to say, the difference between the levels of the water on both sides of it.

A lock is more like a weir than a dam. To be able for them to work smoothly there has to be enough water between two consecutive locks. The exact amount needed depends on the capacity of the two locks in question. If two locks are very close to each other the canal between them has to be widened in order to let it hold more water, which makes it look more like a lake.

There is usually only one lock at each point along a canal for boats heading in both directions. When not in use, both gates of a lock are closed. On approaching a gate, one person will jump of the boat, open one gate to let it in, close the gate behind him, open the gate on the other side and then move the boat out. As the second gate is opened, the level of the water under the boat will rapidly change and anyone standing on the boat will feel like he is

standing in a lift, being either raised up or lowered down to wherever the new level may be.

If you travel on a boat this is simple, when you approach a lock you open a gate, get in, close the gate behind you, then open another gate and get out. You also need to lock both gates behind you before you go. The locks are long bolts without handles, so you would need to have a key with a long handle to wind the bolt lock or unlock.

You can go everywhere by the canal. The Rochdale canal goes from the very top of the Greater Manchester to the city centre. The numbering of the locks start in the north and increase as they approach Manchester. The one just before the city centre is number 82. Locks 80 and 81 are so close to each other–less than 100 metres apart–so the section of the canal lying between them widens into a round shape like a lake in order to increase the volume of the water.

At the Gay Village a part of it must have been filled in to make some pubs and a car park. Here you need to come up from the canal to the road and walk along the canal through the Gay Village. Thereafter you can walk along the canal all the way to Castle Field. The Oxford Road Lock is numbered 88 while the one at Castle Field 92.

The Rochdale Canal ends here in Castle Field, but from here the Bridgewater Canal goes all the way to the Salford Quays, which is not far from the Manchester United Stadium in Old Trafford.

Once you see the stadium, turn right on to the Throstle Nest Bridge to cross over the canal to the road on the opposite side. Scramble down a rough path or a hole in the thick vegetation to get to the Ship Canal.

On 11^{th} July 2002 I was there along my way to the newly opened Imperial War Museum the rough had been cleared so that the entrance to the path is now clearly visible, but the hole was still there. The Manchester Ship Canal passes under the Trafford Road Bridge.

I walked along the canal again three days later. It was Sunday and the weather was perfect. *Shūhei* asked me in the morning what I was going to do today, and I told him I wanted to walk northwards to as far as possible.

On the left hand side, on leaving the city, is the Royal Mill was first built in 1797 and rebuilt in 1912. It is now in total dilapidation and the windows are all broken. It is connected to another mill, the Union Mill, across a lane by a walkway above. Further up at Gate 77 the path is no longer covered with running water, for the draining tube which used to flood it now pours into the canal.

After the Church Street there one mill is being worked upon on the other side. Old wooden planks have been ripped off the floor and stuck out in bunches through every window, it is quite a sight to see. Then there is a

diversion of the tow path because of a bridge construction, and then Lock 66. Lock 65 after the bend divides industries from the nature. Even children you meet from here on seem better behaved and saner compared with city-bred brats. The underwater plants, water plants, lotus, and tall grass along both banks will all probably disappear once the canal is opened for the boats and barges again. Here you start to see houses with the backyard opening on to the canal. The distance between locks lengthens.

The M60 has now become a ring road surrounding both Manchester and Salford, whereas before 2000 it only completed three-quarter of the circuit. The new stretch goes from the Middleton Road in Middleton to the Manchester Road in Denton. Here at White Gate it becomes parallel with the Rochdale canal and crosses it in that fashion, while the latter runs through a tunnel formed underneath it. You cannot follow along the canal into the tunnel, but have to come up to the surface and cross over the noisy M60.

The foot bridge which leads you across is completely wrapped up to form a wide tube the top and the sides of which are well opened, which makes it quite breezy and pleasant inside the tube. I cannot see why the tow path should not go under the road instead.

The Rochdale Canal is managed by British Waterways, North West Region which also manages many other canals including the Lancaster, Leed & Liverpool, Caldon, Macclesfield, Shropshire Union, Llangollen, Montgomery, Huddersfield Narrow and Pead Forest Canals, River Weaver and Millennium Ribble Link. These canals date back 200 years and cover 600 miles.

The reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal in May 2001 marked the success of the *mission impossible*, for the canal includes the Standedge Tunnel which is the longest, deepest and highest canal tunnel in the UK. The tunnel was completed in 1811 and is 3 miles long, 645 feet above sea level and 638 feet below the surface. And when the Rochdale Canal's restoration is finally completed in 2002, the South Pennine Ring, established since 1^{st} April 2000 , will come into being and will consist of the Ashton, Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canals, the Northern section of the Peak Forest Canal, as well as the Rochdale and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal already mentioned.

The Lancaster Canal may not be the most spectacular to travel along in a boat but it certainly gives you the least hassle among all the canals since it has a 41 mile stretch from Preston to Tewitfield with no locks.

Another canal, the Millennium Ribble Canal opening in 2002, which is the first canal to be built in England since the 19^{th} century will connect it with the rest of the canal network.

The Leeds & Liverpool Canal, with its 127 miles, is the longest canal in Britain. It contains the staircase locks at Bingley Five Rise and averages 1.5 miles between locks.

Sometimes a rise is not enough and you need a boat lift. The Anderson

Boat Lift is one of these. It was built in 1875 and reopens in 2002.

The Bridgewater Canal was built by the third Duke of Bridgewater, or rather by James Brindley his engineer who has also built the first British canal at Sankey in Warrington. It began carrying coal from collieries in Worsley to Castlefield in 1761.

The last stretch which completed the M60 ring was completed in October 2000 and costed £250 million. Industrial and business parks come up along this ring road like mushrooms. There are the Tameside Park, Northbank Industrial Estate, and Waterside Park. Other business quarters come up because of regeneration, for instance the Centenary Park and Dock 9 because of the regeneration of Salford Quays.

Manchester Science Park must have been the first one among these. It was established as early as 1984 as a joint venture between the University of Manchester, UMIST, Manchester Metropolitan University and Manchester City Council. It is also close to M60.

I remember it was very quiet in 1995. Sometimes I ventured that way, but hardly found a soul even on weekdays that I felt scared. Back then you never stray away from the main roads.

The Imperial War Museum here is the first one of its kind outside the Southeast. It is designed by Daniel Libeskind. He designed it in the shape of broken shards.

Imagine the globe is broken into pieces and these pieces randomly join one another and you have this museum or something similar. One such shard stands tall above the rest which houses a tower and a high and eerie platform.

The main theme inside the museum is about peace in line with the international theme but which is unique for the UK because in other Imperial War Museum's you have more weapons and less tragedies.

The Air Shard at the museum has a 55-metre high tower which leans at four degrees. The Water Shard is a restaurant with a good panoramic view of the Manchester Ship Canal and the Lowry on the other side. The Earth Shard contains the Main Exhibition where there are six silos containing exhibitions of the various themes, Experience of War, Women and War, Impressions of War, Empire and Commonwealth and War, Science and Technology and War, and Legacy of War.

It is well designed in a way that there are just enough things on exhibition to convey all the ideas without the place being cluttered. There are also six time lines, namely 1900–1914, 1914–1918, 1919–1938, 1939–1945, 1946–1990, and 1990–present. The things on display in-between silos are Harrier Jump-jet, Artillery piece, Fire-fighting Trailer, Trabant Estate Car, T34 Russian Tank.

I have seen the real Trabant running as well as being stacked up in thou-

sands, back in 1990.

L. S. Lowry (1887–1976) was an artist of Manchester. His paintings are pure but filled with loneliness as that was what made him paint. He said, 'I started off a painting having got no idea in mind what it is going to look like.'

Sportcity is being built in East Manchester which costs 77 million pound of lottery fund. It is designed by Arup and built by Laing. After the Games, it will become the stadium for the Manchester City Football Club which, for more than 80 years, has been at Maine Road.

There is another 77 million pound from the prime minister Tony Blair for regeneration, jobs and housing of East Manchester. Construction works are now going on everywhere in the city. There is a 500 million pound project to build Metrolink from Piccadilly to Ashton-under-Lyne via the stadium, to the Airport, and to Rochdale via Oldham. The stadium has shades held up like a wobbling windscreen shade by cables from the tips of twelve arrows all around it. Four arrows on both sides poise on coiled springs made up of ramps leading to the spectator seats.

The John Ryland Library at Deansgate has obtained nearly 300,000 pound of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Its collection is divided into numerous different archives

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In a few days it will be the Commonwealth Games here in Manchester. New buildings are still cropping up like mushrooms, though half of them are in reality renovation works of existing buildings.

Some buildings are lucky and saved, some less so and perishes. The Free Trade Hall was unique in this matter. I think they are going to rescue only half of it, that is the front part. The Hallé orchestra used to play their concerts here but has now moved to the new Bridgewater Hall.

The front part of the Free Trade Hall is curved like a tube while the rear part looks like a box. But the stacco figures of men on top of the rear wall looked plain but simple. They were either destroyed to pieces recently, or were removed for keep somewhere else. I hope the latter is the case because I like those reliefs. It was a pity I never took a picture of them when they were still there.

Who would have imagined that our values can differ greatly from one person to another. I think they may plan to build an extension to the front part after the demolition of the rear, something that will contrast with it. Charles Hallé began giving his concerts at the Free Trade Hall in 1858.

Last month another glass-clad building has been opened. The Urbis is literally a blue building covered all over in rectangular pieces of glass It is

shaped like the wedge that you put on the floor to prop a door open. It is, interestingly, a museum of cities.

Manchester is the world's first industrialised city because the industrialisation took root here, and with it the labour movement. It is not difficult to imagine that whenever the Conservative party rules the city will fall from use into neglect. I think it has been a silent strategy of Tony Blair to bring Manchester back abreast with its former glory during the 19th Century.

The 17th Common Wealth Games coming up this month seems to be a part of this plan. Many reasons lead me to think that this will be the city that links England and the UK to Europe and the rest of the world. I began to see police patrolling the streets on horse backs last year, a sight which you do not normally see except in some chosen areas in London. The trams here are called 'metro' as undergrounds in Europe are, and the name is also used as the name of the daily newsletter of the transportation networks of Greater Manchester.

The Urbis is open everyday. The admission price for one adult is five pounds. It's brochure tells us to think of the city as a vast, living organism, which is fair enough, but then it says, 'Select your crime, choose your city and receive your sentence, with the world's only automatic law dispenser.'

The museum is based on the stories of Manchester, Los Angeles, Paris, Sao Paolo, Singapore, and Tokyo. I do not see any reason why it would not include the story of New York here, unless that this is after the 11th September 2001.

Terrorism makes you feel your life is so short. But ironically, for an onlooker at least, events like the 11th September bombings of the World Trade Center make one feels that life is long, in a sense that many things have happened between then and now. Many innocents have been killed, many a revenge, more innocent victims, and history turns its courses before our eyes.

I have not been inside the Urbis, but from the pamphlets it is obvious that there are people in Sao Paolo who commute in helicopters, in 1880s London-town was built in Tokyo and Singapore was founded by Stanford Raffles in 1819 to be the Manchester of the East.

Manchester Ship Canal brings cargo ships 56 kilometres from Liverpool to Salford docks. The largest of these was Carchester which carried 14,000 tonnes of grain to Trafford Park. It was opened by Queen Victoria in May 1894, and at one time used to carry five per cent of British trade.

Most canals now have fallen into disuse and become solely for leisure businesses, except the Manchester Ship Canal which still handles more than seven million tonnes per annum which includes the one million tonnes for its upper reaches between Warrington and Manchester.

The opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games is fabulous. The whole stadium looked at from above seems like a spaceship. A Kiwi performs Haka

in front of the Queen and at the end there are shows one of which is called *Spirit of Manchester* where there are sounds of thunder and lightnings flash from one end of the spaceship to another.

Kirsty Howard gives the baton back to the queen. She is a girl who was born with her hearth back to front and has to have oxygen tubes permanently stuck into her nose. The queen descends some flight of steps down to where she is, then climbs back up again to get to the podium to make her speech.

Yesterday the baton arrived at the town hall and there were music and fireworks there. I strolled there to have a look. The Albert Square was filled with people. In front of the Town Hall there were two rows of flags on long poles and lots of flowers. There will be festivals at various places in the city everyday during the games.

The Commonwealth Games are held once every four years. The first games were played at Hamilton, Ontario, in 1930 where 400 athletes from 11 countries participated. There were no games in 1942 and 1946 because of the War. From 1934 on they were held at London, Sydney, Auckland, Vancouver, Cardiff, Perth, Kingston, Edinburgh, Christchurch, Edmonton, Brisbane, Edinburgh again, Auckland, Victoria, and finally in 1998 at Kuala Lumpur. They have never been hosted in Africa.

This year the only sport which is not played in Manchester is shooting which is held in Bisley, Surrey. The next games will be in Melbourne.

Before this it used to be called British Empire Games, British Empire and Commonwealth Games, and British Commonwealth Games.

England, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales play against one another in these games, even though in the Olympics they are the same team.

The Games were called the British Empire Games from 1930 to 1950, then the British Empire and Commonwealth Games until 1962, the British Commonwealth Games from 1966 to 1974, and then simply the Commonwealth Games from 1978 on.

Team sports were included for the first time in 1998 in Kuala Lumpur. So the All Black is here in Manchester. But before 1998 relays must have already been competed, and in a way these also are team sports. For this year you have to know names like Kate Anderson and Ian Thorpe.

The latter is also known as Ian *Thorpedo* Thorpe because of the speed of his swimming. He is unassailable in medium distance free-style in which he wins six gold medals here. He also aims for another gold in his experimental back-stroke, but comes out with a silver.

According to Charlie, he is a *freak* with his size-17 feet. In a TV interview he said that his flipper feet make him tired quicker than others. But, having watched him swimming, I realise that it must be his hands that tire him more

than his feet; he puts them too close to the centre line above his head. With this, it would be difficult for him to compete in long distance categories, for example the 1,500 metre.

He has a similar problem with his backstroke, except that now it is worse than before. Now one of his hands, I think the right one, actually crosses this straight line extending from the top of his head. It will definitely tire and drag him, unless I am mistaken.

I enjoy watching the All Black play. It's good that they could play in the Commonwealth Games. They make rugby seem such a classic act to watch, and all the other teams barbarous in comparison. In the Games, it is Rugby 7 they play, whatever that means.

Both the marathon and the triathlon are outdoor events. You do not need a ticket, and I watched them live. At the marathon, people lined the streets the whole last mile before the Sportcity stadium. The triathlon was competed at Salford Quays.

I was a bit worried for the contenders because the water in the ship canal may not be clean. I remember having seen a sign there which says, 'Hazard! Untreated water. No swimming.' But I guess it does not matter if you do not do it regularly and in such public event as this, though Penny did give me round eyes when I told her about the sign.

When swimmers swim towards you they seem hardly moving. Looking at from the top of Detroit Bridge at the Quays they seem mere tiny spots, so insignificant. It is better if you watch from the banks, because then you see them sideway and they move quicker that way. The best things is to see them broadcasted. The close-up by the zoom lenses make them much more impressive to watch.

There is a ferry which takes people from one side of the canal to the other for free on the day of the triathlon. The Lowry Footbridge is closed off except to the competitors.

America is not among the Commonwealth nations, and that surprises me a great deal.

'Why is America not here in the Commonwealth Games?', I query Steve.

'No idea,' he says, 'May be they fought for their independence, that's why?'

On which I brood, 'But India fought for their independence too. And Australia is in the Commonwealth. What's the difference?'

'May be they are too big,' I carry on, 'Perhaps if they come they would come as fifty countries instead of one, like England, Wales and Scotland of the UK?'

It could be because America fought its way out of the British Empire, and the Commonwealth Games used to be called the British Empire Games. May

be that's why. Or it could be that not all the fifty states of the U.S. belonged to the British Empire; some of them were French territories.

Visitors who come to during the Games and those who take part in it see only harmony. The English, however, are trapped within their own history and thus silently embroiled over the issue on the national level. The Greater Manchester represents Labour's values while the Greater London Conservative's. The games have justified a huge amount of capital flows into the city as well as the regeneration of what used to be some of the worst corners to live in in the UK, take for example Moss Side.

In the press release of this Queen's Golden Jubilee Year, Manchester is only mentioned once when it says that the Queen visits the Jewish Museum here.

Manchester was actively involved with the Puritan during the Civil War as well as with the Jacobite in the 18th century. Queen Victoria did not like the statue of Oliver Cromwell when she came here in 1867 to unveil the statue of her husband Prince Albert. A few years later Abel Heywood the mayor had to open the new town hall himself because she would not come.

The statue of Oliver Cromwell had been moved from the city centre to Wythenshawe Park where is now stands. The Wythenshawe Hall in the park belonged to the Tatton family for nearly four centuries. It was built in 1540 by Robert Tatton.

Another Robert Tatton defended his home as a royalist, against Cromwell's troops. For three months they laid siege to the Hall. Two cannons were brought from Manchester for the purpose, and Tatton escaped to join the King at Chester.

After the Civil War the Wythenshawe estate expanded to about 2,500 acres. Then in 1924 Robert Henry Greville Tatton sold the estate lands. The Hall and 250 acres were bought and donated to the city.

The Wythenshawe Hall is one of the four galleries collectively called Manchester City Galleries. The others are Manchester Art Gallery, Gallery of Costume in Platt Field, and Heaton Hall.

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Conwy is a small town in the north of Wales. It stands at the estuary of the Conwy River. I come here with students of the English classes.

You can nearly walk around the town on top of the wall which leads to the Conwy Castle. The castle was built in 1287 under the order of King Edward I. You can walk across the town in fifteen minutes. Outside the wall are fields and forests.

Not far from Conwy is Llandudno, a great place because of the Great Orme. From the promenade along the North Shore I walk along Gloddaeth Avenue

to the other promenade along the West Shore. Then I start to walk along the road that encircles the promontory.

At one point I break off from the road to the right where there is a path leading up the slope. Already the view is magnificent, and I can see the sea below and a piece of land far away.

The path leads to an opening where you have a panoramic view of the sea. It is windy up here. I also meet a few people, so it must be a well-known place after all, though I discovered it all by myself because I have neither read about it nor picked up any brochure before I climbed up here, since the Tourist Information in Llandudno was closed for lunch.

I decide to walk on, for I think there must be a way to go around the cape and to the North Shore. The path is very scenic. Along the way there is this breath-taking view to my left, and to my right the plateau and peaks of the Great Orme. I walk pass some tents and a few people camping.

I must have reached the other, opposite side of the promontory to that which I started from. Below there is a road that winds adventurously on top of the cliffs. At one point along the road I see what looks like a faked castle, with its crenellated wall, overlooking the waves below breaking on the rocks from the top of the cliff where it sits.

The way after this becomes more and more obscure. Sometimes plants on both sides overgrow and meet each other in the middle of the path, so that they brush against my body as I walk straight into them. The further I walk along, the less like a path it becomes. Further up fifty yards to the right some people are talking and laughing, so there must be an easier path up there. But I do not know how I could get up there where they are, so I trudge along until the path comes to its definite end further from where there is a drop to the sea of overgrowths below. Farther away I can see a village and a cemetery.

There is no question about going further from here, so I turn back and retrace the steps I made. After a while, the path becomes unfamiliar and so I realise that this must be a different way from the one by which I came.

Finally I reach the path up there where I heard people shouting and laughing earlier. It goes straight on along a stone wall. I meet one couple, and upon my asking the way the man says that this is the way to get back to Llandudno, so I thank him and start along it without ceremony. I pass under a cable car carrying people up from the town. Then comes a climb down the a sheer drop, and I scramble down it.

Once at the bottom, there is a road on the other side of which is a park, and so the paths greatly improves and are easier. Soon a tarmacked road is reached, and after that the Pier and the beach of the North Shore.

The pier is Victorian and is over 2,000 feet long. The crescent of North Shore is forever crowded in summer. On the other side of it is the Little

Orme, but there is no time to go there. I find my way through the crowd and barely have enough time to walk to the car park where our coaches are waiting. I am lucky to be exactly on time.

The Great Orme has added another dimension into my life. I feel myself changed after having seen it. But I nearly have missed my coach. If I came back half an hour later than this Aoife would surely have left me behind.

The Great Orme is a huge outcrop of rocks which slant in layers down from northeast to southwest, which is why it was a gentle slope on the way up for me but a scramble down a precipice down the other side.

There are many interesting castles in Wales, more than there are in England. With this and the widespread use of the written Welsh language, the country seems to be more European than England is. There are castles at Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy, Criccieth, Denbigh, Dolbadarn, Dolwyddelan, and Harlech. These castles played the most active role during the war between Wales and England in the thirteenth century at the time of King Edward I.

Cricieth Castle was first built by Llywelyn the Great between 1230 and 1240. His brother, Dafydd ap Gruffudd who ruled at Denbigh, was killed by Edward I during the latter's campaigns against Wales. The name of Denbigh Castle in Welsh is Castell Dinbych. There Master James of St George, and architect of King Edward I, was also responsible for the new castle.

Dolwyddelan Castle sits deep in Snowdonia. It was built between 1210 and 1240, again by Llywelyn the Great. The castle fell to Edward I's force in 1283, the same year that Denbigh Castle did.

The Harlech Castle is a World Heritage Inscribed site. It was built by Edward I to keep the Welsh at bay in Snowdonia. In 1404 it was taken by Owain Glyn Dŵr who later held a parliament there.

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York was built by the Romans in 71 AD, and used to be called Eboracum then. Constantine the Great, who built Constantinople, became the Roman Emperor here in 306 AD. The present name of the city came from the Vikings, who derived it from Jorvik or Yorwik, the name of their flourishing kingdom.

The York Minster is the largest medieval structure in the United Kingdom. It is the fourth minster built on the site the first one of which stood here in the 7^{th} century. The building of the present minster started in 1220 and finished in 1472, a span of more than 250 years.

York is in Yorkshire whose symbol is a white rose, while Manchester is in Lancashire whose symbol is a red rose.

On 10^{th} August the pre-sessional English classes go there, and I with them.

Eva is a little jumpy today. John says that she dreamt three days ago that the coach left without her, so she keeps telling the driver time and again, 'Don't ever leave without me!'

I think she has been working too hard. She is still young, and when in the previous trips some of the students were late and she had to say that the coach would have to leave without them, I think she felt the stress more than us. Those people who were actually late, however, were the luckiest of all, who do not experience any stress, since they never heard any such remark.

We come here together in three coaches. The coach I am in belongs to Belle Vue. Perhaps that is the name of a company. It used to be the name of a zoo situated between Gorton and Manchester.

On board it is, 'No food. No drink. No smoking'. I think to myself, 'What if the sign should have said instead, "No food, no drink. No smoking, no food"?' Then, I think, it would have meant that unless we smoke, there would be no drink!

In York there is the York Minster, a large medieval Gothic cathedral that is so tall that one must see if one is not blind. Here stood a wooden church built for Edwin the Anglo-Saxon king who became a Christian through his wife Ethelberga.

Here again a Norman cathedral was started in 1080 which took twenty years to build. This latter cathedral was rebuilt in the present form in 1220 and consecrated in 1472. The 128 stained glass windows here date back to between the 12^{th} and the 20^{th} centuries.

The city walls here were built during the 13^{th} and the 14^{th} centuries and the remaining three quarters of them are very well preserved. On top of each gate there is a shop which sells odd things.

There is a poem printed on a sheet, said to be written by some lady of ninety-two who says that she is constantly attended in her old age by two gentlemen who compete with each other; the first one, 'Will Power gets me going in the morning'; while the second, 'Arthur Ritis never leaves me alone.'

There is no need for a vicar to tell her to start thinking about the after-life since she is old; she always ask herself, for instance, every time she goes into a kitchen, 'What am I here after?'

Another sheet contains a nun's prayer a part of which runs, 'to be helpful, but not bossy.'

King's Manor belongs to the University of York since 1963, and now houses the Department of Archaeology. Henry VIII, Charles I and James I all had stayed here. Around 1270 a house was built here as residence of Abbot of St Mary's Abbey. In 1539 there was a dissolution of the Monasteries, and from then until 1641 it housed both the Council of North as well as its President.

In the Museum Gardens close by there are ruins of the Norman church, a Benedictine abbey founded in 1080 and dissolved by Henry VIII and subsequently plundered. In the garden there is a tree planted for Charles Allen (1887–1972) who was a botanist.

The roads around York form a double ring system where A1237 is the outer ring, but the inner ring is much smaller and not as easily defined. Outer rings around cities have junctions whereas inner rings have intersections. The difference between these two is that junctions are made up of loops, flyovers, or tunnels, and therefore have no traffic lights.

Built by the Romans were the first city walls parts of which still remain. William the Conqueror built a castle after he won the city in 1069. The moats around the city walls now are all filled up and dry.

On the sides of turrets there are slits in the shape of a cross which are widened out on the inside to allow easy access to the openings so that arrows can be shot from them to cover a wide angle outside the walls.

I walk up and down the steps which lead up to the turret on the east of the city. Between the walls on both sides is a space just wide enough for one person to pass through. The lower parts of the wall reach up to your waist when you walk on top along the walls.

There are smaller turrets at strategic locations and at the corners of the city walls. At these places also there is sometimes a tiny turret only large enough for one small person to fit in. Most of these are cylindrical in shape, with walls covering them nearly all around except for the opening in the back to allow a soldier to get in.

At one of these, however, the wall completely surround it and the only way you can get in to watch from the slit is to climb into it through the opening on top! The walls of the battlements are crenellated at a wide interval.

At one point just outside the wall there is a kiln, a half sphere with an access tunnel on one side. For all I can imagine, it could have been used as a bakery as well as a kiln.

The Pavement has been here since 1378. Here Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland was beheaded 22^{nd} August 1572 and an effigy of Oliver Cromwell was burnt in 1660 at the restoration of King Charles II.

There are roundabouts and fun parks everywhere. Is this not indeed another Blackpool? The St Andrew Society of York was founded in a coffee house on 7^{th} December 1894 .

I walk to the National Railway Museum on Leeman Street. It is a big museum which gives an excellent history of trains. There is a real carriage of the Japanese Shinkansen bullet train in which you can sit and watch video.

The speed of Mallard in 1938 exceeded 120 mph. There is a turntable 70

feet in diameter which was once used to turn the engines around. Stationary winding engines use rope haulage to pull trains up a gradient as steep as one in eight.

Rails are flat bottomed steel bars, at one in twenty inclination, on which runs the railway wheel. The wheel has a raised outside edge on the side toward the axle called flange which holds the wheel in place when it turns. The rail is connected to the foot by the web which has a cross-section narrower than its own. The foot is fit on the base plate made of cast iron. This in turn rests upon the sleeper which is a beam made of wood or nowadays pre-stressed concrete.

As for the track gauge, which is the separation between the rails, the Great Western and other Western County railways used a gauge of seven feet and a quarter inches. George and Robert Stephenson used a gauge of four feet eight and a half inches, which was recommended in 1846 by a Royal Commission on Railway Gauge and has become standard. The last broad gauge ran in 1892.

There is also the replica of Stephenson's Rocket, the real thing of which was built in 1829. On the way back our driver points out to one gentleman a plot of farm where the motorways diverge to enclose it on both sides. The location is awkward because the owner of the farm would not sell, so they built the motorways around it in such a way that it would be impossible for him to sell it now, unless it were to make a petrol station. Towards the left is the Sutherland moor.

§

The following week we go to Blackpool. This is the second time I go there. Everyone who has never been to Blackpool is always held in disbelieve when he sees it for the first. It is nothing like anything else in England. Vera gives me round eyes when I see her after the trip. Fortunately Jesús drank too much at a Spanish party last night, so he is spared the surprise today. I see him playing football on the grass at St Gabriel Hall in the afternoon when we come back.

I go with Anh and Duc from Vietnam and Madoka from Japan. All of us go to the beach first. We take our shoes off and take lots of pictures. I only like the part of Blackpool on this side of the promenade. On the other side it is completely different. Things for children and things for weird adults exist side by side here in Blackpool, but at the piers on this side of the promenade there are only fun things for children.

§

The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life. I read that somewhere on our trip the following week to Chester. Here there are Roman remains which include an Amphitheatre with the original wall ten metres high and could contain 7,000 spectators. There is nothing new on Earth; now we have stadiums instead of amphitheatres and sportsmen instead of gladiators.

During the Civil War of 1642–6 King Charles I was here and the city was besieged for 18 months by the Parliamentarian forces.

§

Bike Away is the word. In Manchester nowadays you could go on your bicycle to a train station, leave it there in a locker to get on a train to go to work and be sure that it will still be there when you return in the evening.

Sixty-six such lockers are being installed at many stations. You only need to pay a returnable deposit which according to a pamphlet is twenty pounds but which I remember having seen written on those lockers at the Stockport bus terminal as ten pounds. Some of the lockers are tall, like those in Stockport, and you put in your bicycle in an upright position.

§

I always bake bread these days since I have bought a can of dried yeast and want to use it all before I move. Apart from dried yeast, bread can also be made from fresh yeast, but this I have never seen.

You put the dried yeast, which comes in powder, into lukewarm water, generally a mixture of one part boiling water and two parts cold water, in a bowl and leave it in a warm place for ten to fifteen minutes by the end of which it will grow into a culture, all frothy.

After that you mix the yeast culture with flour, add some herbs and salt if you wish, and then knead everything into a dough. You leave the dough for half an hour to one hour and then bake it in the oven at gas mark five for fifteen minutes, then turn it over and bake further for another five minutes.

I normally put the yeast mixture to culture on top of the cupboard in our kitchen, 'Otherwise somebody might throw it away because he might think it's some kind of dirty froth,' I answer the look from one girl friend of Ian my flat mate.

'That's how it looks,' I show her the culture which is starting to expand in rings. It is an amazing sight to watch it grows before your eyes.

'Basically you put the dried yeast into a warm solution of sugar until it grows into a living culture all alive and kicking,' I explain to her.

'Then you mix the culture with flour and make it into a dough,' I continue seeing that she is interested.

'After that you put the dough into the oven and in doing so you kill all the yeast at once,' she looks at me questioningly.

'You gas them all,' I explain, then seeing her bewildered look I feel somewhat guilty because I think I have gone too far in my explanation.

'I will have to stop thinking about the yeast,' I tell her, 'otherwise I won't be able to become a baker.'

She smiles, which somewhat encourages me and I continue, 'You make a culture of yeast and then you obliterate the whole culture in one go.' She looks uneasy again, which makes me feel guilty.

'Every cook book tells you to preheat the oven before baking the bread,' I turn the direction of my analogy, 'Now I think I know the reason why. It is to make it quicker for the yeast.'

With the smile still on her face she blushes so much that I panic and then wails, 'Ooh! murderer!'

I will never make a good baker.

§

Our life is a stepping from one disappointment to another. Today I ruined the whole slide film trying to develop it myself. It is sad to think that most of the slides I took on my trips with the English classes are gone.

After I realised that it has happened, I fell off from the window sill in my room while trying to clip the film up on the curtain rail for it to dry. I fell backward and hit the mirror with the back of my head so that a corner of it broke off.

Elaine says it is seven years of bad luck if you break a mirror. I have just had my seven years of bad luck nearly to the date. This is September 2002, and I started my bad luck from the time I finished my master degree in September 1995.

This is one of those events which break my heart. The first one I remember was when I knew for the first time that I would have to wear eye glasses. The second time was when I had been disqualified in the university entrance exams in Daiï for having re-applied without cancelling the first offer. That was in 1985. The third time was in 1990 when I was robbed of all my belongings including memorabilia I held dear in Warsaw. And the fourth time a month later when Ace left me, which left me broken heart for nearly seven years. This time I have not cried, which is unusual, though I wish I had.

I feel terrible the morning after the incident, so I do not get up until more

than two hours after I woke up. Then I dream, just before waking up for the second time, that I wash the damaged film with water and there come up colours and pictures. Our brain has the potential to cope with losses.

§

I shall never know how much the bus to the airport cost because it never costs me the same twice and it costs differently depending on whether I go to the airport or come from it.

Today a lady got up on the bus where I was sitting and said, 'Withington!', was told the price; whereby she paid and then said, 'It is never the same when I ask'. Sometimes people say the amount of money to the bus driver instead of telling him the intended destination.

§

Gallery Oldham is a nice gallery in Oldham. I like galleries when there are not that many people inside. I prefer the Manchester Art Gallery in 1994 when fewer people visited it, to nowadays when it is bustling with crowds.

At the Gallery Oldham there is on display a panorama taken in 1879 by Knott. The picture shows predominantly mill chimneys, Victorian flat houses, and the railway lines. The railway to Oldham was planned in 1827, reached Oldham Werneth in 1842, and Mumps in 1847.

Before the coming of the cotton industry the manufacture of hats used to be an important industry here. The transition between these two industries was before this picture was taken. It shows Nelson's hat factory as one of the last of its kind. There used to be a river running through the centre of Oldham. People called it by several names which includes Sheepwashes Brook because sheep used to be washed in it.

§

A wise German used to say, '*Wenn du ruhig leben willst, darft du nicht sagen, was du weißt, und nicht glauben, was du hörst.*' † I believe him.

† Translation, 'If you wish to lead a quiet life, never say what you know and never believe what you hear.'

A Kiwi Lāṇṇạ

§

May my son travel with peace. May *Bra Ratnàtraï* and all sacred things, namely *Bra Sïạmdẹvạdhirạj*, *etc*, protect my son *Nhŭï*, that he may go to New Zealand and return safe and sound, that he may have creativity and make things good and fine.

From mother, 5 April 1983.

Ag gōha massami lōkassa jeṭhthō seṭhthō.
Ha massami āyantimā me jātinatthi.
Dāni punapabavō.

Pañca māre jinōnāthō.
Pattō sambōdhimuttamaṅ.
Catusaccaṅ pakāsesi.
Dhammacakkaṅ pavattayi.
E tena saccavacjena.
Hō tume jayamaṅgalaṅ.

Namō vimuttānaṅ.
Namō vimuttiyạ.

The exchange programme between New Zealand and Daiï has only begun last year, so we are the second pioneer group. We will spend our time here ten months for what would in the future become a year.

For this reason we fly in later than kids from other countries, and therefore miss the orientation. For this reason special orientations have been organised for us, one in each of the two islands. For South Island students this orientation is in Christchurch.

We are eleven American Field Service scholarships students who come from Daiï to New Zealand. We fly from Daiï together with an equal number of students destined for Australia.

There is nothing but laughters and fun, until we part with the Australia group and the last one of them has left the plane when we suddenly feel the solitude of the place and the country that we are going to.

The first thing that strikes me when I walk out of the plane after we have touched down at the airport is the freshness of the air around me. The plane we were on is not a big one, and it stops not far from the arrival building, to the entrance of which we simply walk from the plane. I am among the first ones to leave the aeroplane but the last one to get to the building because I spend my time wandering on the tarmac, trying to fill my lung with all the fresh air there is here.

We arrive in Christchurch on 6 April 1983 and appear on The Star as a six-by-six inches picture on the following day the morning of which Adam and Robert both of whom had recently been AFS students to Daiï join us.

Also with them is a Daiï student, Jack, who is very tall and has quite a prestigious family name. He becomes the centre of everybody's attention and, apart from upsetting a cake once on to the carpet inside the living room, conducts himself most appropriately.

We all stay at the Cracroft House in Christchurch.

Also on The Star of Thursday 7^{th} April is the news about Daiï Air Force dropping napalm on Vietnamese troops who tried to cross the border from Kampuchea into Daiï. Our neighbours who are communist always cause us problems because either Russia or China backs them.

Dad Allister meets me outside the train station in Ashburton with his car, a yellow Hillman station-wagon, and Skampy, a small but stout dog in black and white with short, slick hairs, who turns out to be slightly paranoiac.

I later meet the rest of my host family. There are Pat whom I call mum, Nikki, Andy, Ritchie, and Flana who also lives with us. We live in a place called Allenton, though I never call it by that name, a mere ten minute's walk from Ashburton College where I am going to attend.

At school I am given a voucher. This I bring over to a shop downtown to get my school uniform which consists of a pair of black trousers, a pair of shorts, a pair of black shoes made of sheep skin and two shirts, one with short- and the other with long sleeves.

I also get necessary stationery using the voucher, when Andy comes along with me, or rather it is her who brings me here. She was in Daiï last year.

At Ashburton College I could have chosen to study Form 5, which is the case with many of the students from Daiï as I am to learn later. That would have been easier than Form 6 that I choose.

There is another AFS student here whose name is Kelly. She comes from the US and arrived two months earlier than I did, and is also studying in the Sixth Form. Since she came here before me, her class is 601. Having arrived after her I am therefore put into the class 602, this is all very simple.

It is already Second Term now. I have missed the whole of the First Term. The group picture of our class was taken last term, so I am forever excluded from this historical piece of record unless some of my friends should have enough understanding to etch my picture into a space that is left there, perhaps intentionally, in the middle of the back row.

Our teacher is Mr Mathias but some call him P. J., which he never knows but dislikes nonetheless, though they are his initials.

There are also two students from Malaysia one of whom is a girl while the

other one a boy whose name is Mat.

The niceness of the people of the land is inversely proportional to the density of the same, as some physicists might say. This is an easy rule of thumb. We have plenty of space here, so we are good to one another.

This may be the case for those who were born here, but sometimes people who come from afar carry a hatred with them here and it remains with him until he dies. Then there is not much one could do except to wait for them to expire. People never change, but we all die.

In this manner this Kiwi Land has had its fair share of imported conflicts. The White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, aka WASP, quarrelled with the Catholic Irish labourers during the 19$^{\text{th}}$ century as one example.

The Irish came in great number because of the potato famine, that is the Great Famine during 1845–48. This famine was caused by a disease known as the potato blight. It hit hard because potatoes are an essential ingredient in the Irish diet.

The former Irish population of 8 million fell by 2 million, half of which died from diseases like cholera, dysentery and typhus, while the other half went abroad. Some of these latter million emigrated here, and with them came the conflict between the Irish Protestants and the Irish Catholics.

The West Coast orator Richard John Seddon who went on to become the most quarrelsome prime minister between 1893 and his death in 1906, used racial hatred as one of the instruments to both obtain and maintain himself in power.

The present Prime Minister, Sir Robert David Muldoon, is of an Irish-Liverpudlian lineage. He has been in his office since 1975, and is always the prime minister throughout my time here. His defeat came in July 1984, some five months after I have gone back to Daiï.

AFS started giving scholarships after World War II. Since then, New Zealand has always participated in the programme. In 1947 fifty students from twelve countries went to American colleges.

The programme soon changed from exchanging college students to exchanging high school students. But it was still a programme between the US and other countries. The Multi National Programme was launched in 1970 by AFS International, and New Zealand was among its pioneers. The MNP gives its students the experience at high school in countries other than the US.

Now we are here as pioneers for Daiï students who come to New Zealand. Therefore our exchange period lasts only 10 months instead of the usual 12 months.

As a rule, after our time in New Zealand we have to leave the country

for at least a year, during which time we may not come back here. We are ambassadors to our country not emigrants. The programme is not supposed to change us into a New Zealander.

Among the more serious rules AFS has set for us is a rule that we may not drive a vehicle. The rule gives no explanation, but it is so strictly implemented that if they know you drive a car or a motorcycle you are sent back home immediately with no further ado.

This explains why I always have my picture taken with me sitting at the wheel or on a driver's seat.

The 25th April of each year, which is also the St Mark day, is the ANZAC day. On that day in 1915 was the debacle on Turkey's Gallipoli Peninsula where many New Zealanders died among those who joined the Australia-New Zealand Army Corps forces to fight in North Africa and Europe. Between 1914 and 1918 almost 17,000 died among the 100,000 Kiwis who joined the fight. ANZAC fought again during World War II with nearly 200,000 soldiers. This time 10,000 died.

This year the ANZAC day is on Monday. It is much fun to be walking the streets today. We only have to keep our solemn manner while standing in front of the monument of the brave soldiers who perished in the Wars.

The Salvation Army sells red poppies in thousands. But there is no need to buy them really, since you can easily pick one up from anywhere.

There are people everywhere. And there are also lemonade stands. The bagpipe band keeps on playing while they walk back after the ceremony. Ritchie and I follow them until they finally disperse. And even then we hang around talking to the players, all of whom are huge and stout I think they must all be a rugby player.

Ritchie like military things and he joins the School Cadet. And since he is in effect my counsellor, I too join the Cadet. It is all right, and I like it since it is like the Boy Scout I used to join in Daiï, only that I think we practise marching too much here.

This evening mum performs on the stage doing Maori dances with her group. She is not slim, yet she looks so graceful on the stage in her lightly-clad dress with the two *poi* balls that she holds in her hands and swings smoothly about her body.

A Maori dress is similar for both men and women. Both have a waist wrap and a shoulder cloak.

Prince Charles (b. 1948) and Princess Diana (1961–1997) is on their tour to visit New Zealand. They come to Christchurch where they walk about the Cathedral Square. The Weekend Star, 30 April 1983, has pictures of both from the occasion.

During the May Holidays I travel up to Christchurch to stay with *Nāuiš* host family. On 11 May 1983 we go together by car to a hill to the south of Lyttelton Harbour and Christchurch. We leave our place at around 9 am.

Along our way here someone was practising walking along the road side, another was on a horse back. There is a park for tourists who enjoy rambling, camping or picnic.

Once there, we walk from the car park up to Big Rock and back. Then we walk to Magnificent Gully where trees are indigenous. We almost make it to the top of the hill. It is very windy.

The name of *Nāuï*'s host dad is Watt, but we simply call him 'dad' as we do all male host parents of our AFS friends. He is a professor of engineering and a keen photographer. He generally takes slides because it is much easier to deal with the colour and light of these than to deal with those of negatives. He does all the lab works by himself.

He is from the US, and is a professor at University of Canterbury teaching Engineering now. He seems to have been to every place in the world, for instance Russia, UK, France, Canada and Mexico, mainly for scientific meetings.

The tussocks which grow on the hills and mountains are tough. They grow everywhere and in plenty on the hills around the Lyttelton Harbour. No sheep eat them, only goats do. Some farmers keep goats in flocks specially for the purpose of munching away these things. Those whose work it is to cut tussocks are called *tussock grubbers*. We come back to the car to have lunch before returning home.

That night we entertain our hosts with our little performances of Daiï arts. We decide on three sets of performances. The first one is *Nāuï* doing two-handed ritualistic sword dance. Then I do another dance for the sabre. After that I demonstrate alone using two swords.

Really I use only the *mạemāi* and the set formulae, that is the 3rd *māi*, the 7th *māi* and the 9th *māi*, then repeat something similar and finally I receive an unseen cut in the body and thus die.

The third and last performance is singing songs in Daiï with the guitar. We all get up in the end and do the party dance *raṃvong* together. *Tàuï* and Nāung who had not performed earlier also help with the *raṃvong* in which everyone joins, including Scott who is *Nāuï*'s host brother. *Nāuï*'s mom plays and sings American folksongs on the guitar for us.

During the previous year three other Daiï students came and stayed here. Two of them were Yas and Khok. I often envy *Nāuï* because his host parents are rich and he is always taken to places and allowed to do expensive things. Next week their daughter who is studying at a university in the US is coming home for summer. They are going to Mt Hutt to ski.

On 12 May we go downtown to buy Daiï food at Simco where imported spice mixes are sold, for example that used for *balọ̄* (a soup). The staff or owner of it is from Hongkong.

Going from Square towards Cashmere along Colombo Street the shop is on the third road that branches off to the right, probably called Lichfield Street. Opposite Simco is the Music City where I buy a sixty-minute tape cassette which costs $1.60. At Music Centre further down the road towards Cashmere I buy a book on Jazz improvisation for $22.50. There are also a book on photography for $1.50 and a notebook for $3.50. Then we walk uphill to *Nāuï*'s house where I am staying.

I asked *Nāuï* how he thinks about my part of the performance last night. He says the mock fighting was exciting. But I think that it ended a little too soon and could do well with a little sense of humour at the end when I died.

Complicate moves would do well if they are alternated with simple ones. Too much repetition makes a performance boring while too frequent use of complicate moves makes it difficult for the audience to follow the show.

In doing a one-man mock performance the moves need to be done faster than in a two-man combat equivalent of it. But it must also flow smoothly with no senses of rushing. Occasional jabbing is a good idea in between bouts. Beautiful pose like *Grum Traibhob* (a tight guard, *lit* 'Three-World Guard') seems not a bad idea.

Tonight we play cards with mom. The game we play is called Spoon. We sit around in circle and deal four cards to every person. Spoons are placed in the middle the number of which is one less than the number of players. The remaining cards are put together in a pile, faced down in the middle of the circle.

Each player takes turn picking up one card from the pile. For each card one picks up, one among the five cards he holds is discarded by putting it faced down on the table.

Once the cards one holds make up two pairs, a spoon is picked up. The remaining players, upon seeing a spoon being picked up, race against one another to the remaining spoons on the table. The slowest one has to quit the table, the number of spoon is subsequently reduced by one and the game continues as before until there remains only the winner.

In another card game as many cards as possible are dealt out to all the players such that everyone has the same number of cards. The remaining cards are placed in the middle. Whoever holds the two club in his hand put it down face up in the middle.

Other players put down one by one a card of the same suit as the one mentioned. The person whose card proves the highest takes and keeps all the displayed cards and then shows another card from his hand, putting it

face-up in the middle of the table.

At the end of the game the player whose hoard of cards contains the fewest hearts wins. The game can be adapted by considering the queen of spade the same way as hearts, except that it has 13 times the value. For instance if a heart is given the value of one point, then the queen of spade is given 13. Yet another possible adaptation is for all the players to give three worst cards in his hand to the player on his right.

Dad is a very big man, but he drives a sport car so tiny its roof probably reaches up to his waist when he stands upright. He has three cars. The other two are a Colt Mirage with automatic gear and an American car which has the steering wheel on the left-hand side.

This house is on the hill between Christchurch and Lyttelton Harbour. It has a central heating system but it also has a fireplace which makes it look better, more like a home.

Up here on the hill it is warmer than in the city because the warmer air from there drifts upwards while colder air moves downwards. Also it is closer to the sea, and therefore not so cold in winter because sea water retains the heat it receives from the sun better than the land does. This is the same reason that makes smoke from a fireplace rise up the chimney shaft instead of fill up the room. The smoke seeks the easiest way that leads upwards, and cooler air from inside the room flows in to replace it.

One sign on a bus in Christchurch says, 'Children must not remain seated when adults stand'. Another says, 'Please vacate this seat if required by an elderly or disabled person'. And yet another, 'Why take your car to town while the bus costs less than an ice-cream?' Why indeed.

Today is 13$^{\text{th}}$ May. It is the day I have to go back to Ashburton I woke up a little bit late this morning. *Nāui*'s host parents said they would wake us up at six o'clock but it was already past 7.50 when they did. Though I have not yet eaten, I am not at all hungry.

We leave at five minutes to eight because the bus leaves at 8.15. When we pass Takahe we see far away from Christchurch, in the back ground, the mountain range all white with snow. It looks so beautiful, like pictures you see in postcards. Probably the reason for the snow was the heavy rain we had last night.

There was also a strong wind and the temperature was freezing. Yesterday the temperature at Christchurch, here on Cashmere, was 5°C. The wind was strong. It rained, but not heavily so. But what we had last night was a downpour.

Today four of us decide to go to Dunedin during the Queen's birthday when we shall have a holiday two weeks after school starts. We will go on Thursday after school, miss our classes on Friday and stay in Dunedin until Monday,

which is the birthday of the Queen.

But *Nāuï* and I agree among ourselves that we will visit *Òn* in Dunedin before school actually starts because we think there is absolutely no fun at all travelling with the girls. They are so fussy, always complaining and cause nothing but headache. It would be more fun to travel on our own. But I still do not know whether I will be able to make it. Anyhow there is a wedding in Ashburton at three in the afternoon.

We went to Cathedral Square, to where I had already been so many times that I can remember almost everything there. We went to the town hall, that is a drama theatre near the Square.

We also went to Art Centre and Orana Park. The latter is an open zoo where they keep the lions. There is another park at the Magnificent Gully.

Then there are Cashmere, Kiwi Point to where I ran with *Nāuï* and Victoria Park. The two meetings of Daiï students we went to, one at *Tạen*'s place and the other at *Bajrạ*, teaches me the vanity of a group of Daiï people that I will come to see time and again, not only abroad but also in Daiï, where all talks are small talks and only triviality is to be practised in earnest.

There was one Daiï who dyed a part of his hair golden and burnt down a telephone box to prove his love for his girl-friend.

We went to a dinner at Robert's place, to an Anglican church. The person who sits next to me on the bus has been to Daiï five times or so. And only think there were others who do not know where Daiï is.

Ashburton being only about an hour away from Christchurch by car, I arrived here in the morning. In the afternoon I go to a photograph shop to get prints I have ordered from some negatives. Then I buy a shutter release for my camera, which is rather expensive at $4.50 but is necessary.

At three in the afternoon we attend a wedding at an Anglican church. The bride is Leanne and the bridegroom Alistair. Leanne is a relative from mum's side, I think her niece. Alistair had his leg injured playing rugby, so they both sit down throughout most parts of the proceeding. His leg is put in a case of plaster of Paris. He came straight from the hospital.

The wedding starts by the bride, bridegroom, best man and a bridesmaid walking together to the priest. Both the marrying parties sit listening while he speaks to them. Then both stand up, face each other, hold hands, repeat what the priest says and then Alistair puts the wedding ring on his bride's finger. A bridesmaid sings. The bride and bridegroom write something in a book under the cross.

At night there is a party at the Technical Club, which is a rugby society. There are dances and free drinks. I dance with Fiona, Grandma, Andria and Flana. It is very enjoyable. We head for home around 2 am.

Grandma says that after a wedding in church there is always a supper before the breakfast the following morning. I went up to the bride and bridegroom and ask for their autographs. We drank draught Dominion Bitter, brewed and sealed in 745 ml bottles in Timaru by D. B. South Island Brewery.

Back at home I take a picture of the Southern Cross. I climb up to the roof and place my camera there because I have no tripods.

I write letters to *Òn* and *Nāuï* to say that I plan to be at *Òn*'s place from 19 to 22 May. There are trips to North Island with AFS which is rather expensive at $150, to *Òn*'s place in Dunedin, possibly to Mt Cook with Robert, to Mt Hutt with Robert and Andria among others, to Mt Hutt with Grandma recently discussed last night and to some camp with the school if possible. It would be good to be able to do all these!

Ritchie says we may go to Christchurch and spend some four days there. If this is so it would be good, because then I will be able to discuss the trip to Dunedin over with *Nāuï*.

When school starts I want to play basketball. I will also change some of the subjects I study, from Physics to Art History for example.

Everyone goes to watch a rugby match in Ashburton if there is one, as Stewart says, and I think to myself how crazy in sports people here are. I have the Fixture List for 1983 from the New Zealand Rugby Football Union, but only went to one match when Mid-Canterbury plays against British Isles here in Ashburton.

The legend to the Fixture List shows there are three types of matches. The NZRFU Fixtures, shown in capitals and the Lion Rugby Championship Division I and Division II matches. The list starts on Sunday 3rd April when Wellington plays Poneke International Invitation XV in Wellington, Wasps plays Barbarians in Rotorua and Nelson Bays plays Seddon Shield Maori XV in Nelson. The last match of the year is on Monday 3rd October in Greymouth when West Coast plays against Manawatu. Between the first and the last, there are matches every week throughout. The British Isles plays every few days between 14 May and 16 July. It plays against the All Black four times, in Christchurch on 4 June, in Wellington on 18 June, in Dunedin on 2 July and in Auckland on 16 July.

Breakfasts in New Zealand, after I have spent one month here, are usually made up of toasts with butter and jam. Or they can be boiled eggs on buttered toasts. These eggs are not boiled whole, together with shells, as is always done in Daiï and as is sometimes the case here. You bring water in a pot to the boil, break the shell of an egg and put the contents in the boiling water. Once the albumen has turned white, while the yolk is still not hardened, scoop them up and put on to the toasts. For drinks there may be plain water, orange juice, milk, tea, or coffee. Plain water is generally taken from the tab.

For lunch, it depends. If I eat at school it is normally packed lunch, probably two slices of toast with something in between them, which can be cheese, meat, hard-boiled eggs, vegetables, *etc* depending on what are available. With some tomato sauce the whole thing would taste somewhat better.

If you have not brought your own lunch, you can buy food at school. For this you need to buy tickets, for instance pie ticket for pies. Apart from pies there are apples, crisps, ice cream, *etc.* When I am neither at school nor at home there is always Fish & Chips, but if at home it is normally mutton or lamb, potatoes and vegetables with stew on top of everything.

Evening meals, called either dinner or tea, are usually mutton, lamb or chicken together with potatoes, vegetables with stew similar to lunch, and finalised with puddings which can be fruits in syrup, ice cream and corn flakes or some other morning cereals.

Ritchie says that we are going to Christchurch for four days, which is very well for I also want to talk with *Nāuï* about our Dunedin trip. We get a lift by a female relative on mum's side who is travelling up to Christchurch for a hockey match. We stay with Auntie Louis who lives on Langoons Rd., Papanui in Christchurch.

New Zealand is particularly marked for longevity of its people because the air here is so clean. Therefore we have quite a few elderly relatives.

Nāuï comes here with his mom in the morning, 15 May. Mom also brings the sleeping bag that I had left at their place. The far end of *Nāuï*'s room has a recess in the wall which is used to store things like a cupboard. I put the sleeping bag in there out of sight and then forgot about it. I give *Nāuï* the slides from Daiï because I think his dad and mom may want to see some pictures of Daiï.

In the afternoon we go to a museum in town. Ritchie buys a souvenir ring for $2.60 to give to me. We look inside the museum for two hours. There are things which belonged to European settlers, statues, stuffed animals and New Zealand birds and belongings of Tensing Norgay who was the first person in the world to have climbed Mt Everest successfully.

There is a room with displays about the Antarctic and expeditions to the South Pole, a room for prehistoric animals, in particular the birds of the moas family the largest of which was *Dinornis maximus*, literally *the largest of the terrible birds.* Kiwis are also in the moas family.

There is a room with minerals on display, for example a synthetic diamond made to the appearance of some real, world-famous diamonds and the largest diamond in the world, and there is a uranium containing minerals. These minerals are placed on a circular, revolving plate which is partitioned into four quarters by plates in the shape of a cross. Each of these partition contains a piece of rock that either is hid from view or stares into the nozzle of the Geiger counter which has a red light to indicate the amount of radiation it

detects.

The museum also has some ancient potteries from *Bận Jiang* in Daiï. There are stuffed insects, elephants, rhinoceros and bisons, a planetarium and a big, revolving globe.

From Christchurch to Dunedin the train ticket costs $24.40 and the bus costs approximately $20 while from Ashburton to Dunedin these are respectively $19.10 and approximately $16. Also to Dunedin, the bus ticket from Timaru is $10 and from Geraldine $11.90. Since even the bus tickets are this expensive, *Nāuï* and I discuss with each other a while then decide that we shall not go down to Dunedin before the next term starts as we think that our host families probably will take us that way one day.

The sides of the wall at the Cathedral are beautifully lit at night, like Daiï during the bicentenary of the *Ratnākọsindṛ* last year with its light and sound exhibitions. A tripod costs $57.75 at Langwood Camera near the Cathedral.

Under a monument here is written, 'In grateful remembrance of the sons and daughters of Canterbury who fell in the Great War 1914–1918. Give peace in our time O Lord'.

The public library here in Christchurch has quite a few interesting books, especially those about music and photography.

An ad on the bus says, 'Bus off peak hours ... the closest thing to free travel', another, 'Bus twice as much while it costs half as much. Off peak fares are here to stay' and yet another says, 'We'll drive your kids wild these holidays' The bus costs 25c to go from Papanui to Cathedral Square, from Papanui to Auntie Louis' place, and from Cashmere to Square.

Today, 16 May 1983, I wake up very early in the morning, wash my clothes and hang them out to dry. Having finished all this both Auntie Louis and Ritchie are still in bed sleeping. I make something to eat and then break my fast.

Nāuï rings to say that he will not meet me at the post office at 10 o'clock as we have agreed because he has to go to Geraldine with his family earlier than planned. He asks me to deposit the $27.30 for the T-shirt under the name of Mrs Jones together with her address in the back. The money is for the $26 price of the T-shirt and the cost for sending it to me in Ashburton.

From where we stay I take a bus to Cathedral Square. I get off at the office of New Zealand Airlines to get some brochures which I think would be a good thing to do in order to know something about the North Island before I go there with AFS next holidays. Otherwise I may not be able to make the best out of the trip. A staff walks up to me and asks whether I need any help. I have a feeling that I must have been in here too long, so I pick up a few brochures before saying goodbye.

I find my way to the library, asking several people along the way before I

finally reach it. There is a book which teaches how to make an oboe's reed. The methods seem to me very complicated, so I give up writing it down to give to a friend at my school in Daiï who plays the instrument. Taking a photocopy is also out of question since I hardly have any money and will certainly have to walk my way back to Papanui if I do.

From the library I go back to the Square where there is someone giving a speech on Jesus and God. People gather around to listen to him. There is one group among these who keep on questioning whatever he says. The exchanges and the touché are really fun to listen to.

After the fist group finishes, there is another speaker who wears black cloak and trousers like some ancient warrior. At his waist is a plastic sword, just like a child! The ladder on which he stands while giving his speech is profusely decorated. The styles of his speech and his dress attract some hard-core youngsters and punks, both of whom gather around him in great number.

Among these is a group of seven or eight punks who wear their hair in most discordant of fashions. One shaved his head clean, another wears his hair like a native American Indian, that is to say, shaving both sides of his head clean to leave a strip of hair running down the middle of his head, just like what a skunk looks like. Yet others wear their hair like that of a hedgehog, that is pointing out in all directions.

At Cathedral Square there is an underground public toilet, let downwards from above by a set of steps. On the surface it does not look like there is a toilet underneath. I have been to the Square several times already but have never seen it until now. Out of curiosity I briefly survey it.

On my way back I get on the wrong bus. The driver says something about turning right or left, but I pay him no attention. It turns out that there are two different routes for the Papanui bus, namely Papanui and Papanui 1. Both of them pass Cathedral Square before going along Victoria St and Papanui Road. But before they reach the railway Papanui 1 turns right on to Main North St while Papanui turns left towards Harewood Road.

At first when the Papanui 1 I am on turns right I still do not notice there is anything amiss. But a few streets later it suddenly occurs to me that the bus is turning so often whereas the bus I was on this morning just went straight on. I decide to get off the bus and retrace my steps more than five kilometres before getting on the right Papanui bus. I lose about two hours with the bus.

People say they prefer Daiï to New Zealand because the former has more night life and entertainment places.

On the morning of 17 May we go with Auntie Louis to Canterbury University. She parks her car at the car park and we walk around, I take pictures of the buildings, the library both inside and outside, then we return to the car park. Then Auntie Louis takes us to visit a few friends of hers who are generally speaking elderly people.

I go to Timaru with Andrea and Ritchie on 18 May 1983. I have a job delivering newspapers which I did today in the morning. It was very cold outside and I had to take a warm shower when I came back. The evening news on the television says that there is a heavy snow in Dunedin which causes a lot of traffic jam.

We go to Timaru at noon. The sky is overcast, but there is some sunshine falling on the distant mountains. I take a picture of Timaru which shows both the Pacific and the buildings, another picture of the town with snowy mountains as its background and another one of St Mary's Anglican Church. The aperture is always kept at the widest my camera provides, which is 1/4 inches, while the shutter speed is either 1/125 or 1/60 seconds.

Those still learning how to drive put a sign *instructional car* on the roof of their cars to let other people know. Grown on the fields which lie between Timaru and Ashburton are strawberry, various fruits, grass for hay, weeds and berries. For animals there are mainly sheep, some cows and some horses, these latter perhaps exclusively for racing.

South from Christchurch the road divides into two parallel roads both of which lead southwards. One passes by Burnham, crosses over Rakaia River into Rakaia, then passes Ashburton after which it crosses over two other rivers, Ashburton River and Rangitata River into Temuka. The other road heads away from the coast and has less traffic compared with the first one. It passes Darfield, Glentunnel, Windwhistle, Rakaia Gorge, Mt Hutt, Staveley, Mt Somers, Mayfield and Geraldine. At Glentunnel and Windwhistle one can turn right and head towards Lake Coleridge, Springfield and West Coast. One can turn left at Mt Hutt to go to Methven and Ashburton.

Today, 19 May 1983, I go with Grandma and Ritchie to see a film at Tinwald Memorial Hall, the same place where I saw the Sound of Music. The film is the *World Safari* by Alby Mangels, a documentary film about two Australians who travelled around the world in a sailing ship and a van. It shows the way of life of people in the many countries they passed through, 56 altogether.

They sailed from Australia to Tonga, Palmyra, Taraua, Mauru, Ponape, Guam, all of which are islands in the Pacific ocean. After that they carried on to Tokyo, Hongkong, Ḅąngkauk, Penang, Calcutta, Kashmia, Delhi, Bombay, Seychelles, Mombassa from where they then wound their way though Africa to Cape Town, then up through Congo and the Sahara desert to Amsterdam.

Primitive, native Africans hunt and fight with shield and spear. Their shield is made of animal hide, cut into a circular shape and attached to or rather pierced through by a long pole. To this effect they can use both the spear and the poled shield as walking sticks when they are attacking nothing or nobody.

The shield they wield in their left hand while in their right the spear which is held in a throwing position. When they fight the shield is held in front to

protect, and is moved about to deceive the enemy. For attack there are only two moves, either the shield is lifted up and the spear attacks from below or vice versa, that is to say, the shield lowered down while the spear attacks from above it. At all times the spear is held close to the right ear.

The ground floor of the post office in Ashburton has two sections, that is the post office saving bank and the mail sections. I come here either to send a letter or to withdraw money. I have only deposited money once, when I first came here. Today there is $75 more in my account, which I think must have come from AFS. It is probably a pocket money that is meant to last for several months. I would be rich if this is monthly.

You can find two kinds of rice in New Zealand, one with short grain the other with long grain. The latter is similar to Daiï rice. I had never come across short-grained rice in Daiï, that is in my home town *Jiangmhăi* from where I seldom was away. I do not know that the grains of the Japanese rice are short.

Don't Ask Me is a television programme that teaches a variety of things some of which are quite interesting. For example yesterday there was something about bicycle. Modern bicycles were compared with penny-farthings which is less stable. There is a rule of thumb which tells us whether one bike is more stable than another. From the handle bar there is a prong with two shafts leading down towards the front axle. In modern bikes these shafts are not straight but curved forwards in the middle. Their upper part is in line with the axis around which the handle turns, forming a straight line with it. Extend this straight line downwards until it meets the vertical line which passes the front wheel axle and we have a point. A bicycle is most stable when this point of intersection has half the height of that of the axle.

My host family is a typical New Zealand family, which means that there is a craze for sports. Both of my sisters play hockey every weekend, mum and dad are swimming coaches and Ritch plays basketball.

Every country has two favourite sports. Here it is hockey and rugby; in England it is football and rugby, in Daiï football and basketball and in the US American football and basketball.

On Sunday there was a match on *Sport On One* between British Isles and Bay of Plenty. The British Isles led 22:0 during the first half, and won in the end with the score 34:16.

At Ashburton College I am in the class 602 which is looked after by a teacher whom some of my friends call P J. Never once have I called him by that name, how could you call a teacher a pair of jeans.

He teaches Computer Studies. Our school has a new computer laboratory with about ten Apple Personal Computer's (PC's). Most students learn Basic, some does Pascal. I only study the former.

My maths teacher wears his moustache like Einstein. For English, Art History and Music I have excellent teachers from whom I am learning so much.

My Geology teacher is known as 'Worm', a name that he understandably despises. Myself I never think of him by this name. How could one do this to his teacher.

He takes us once on a field trip in search of fossils on the mountain, Mt Somers. All the mountains of New Zealand were once under the Pacific ocean some millions of years ago. They are limestone mountains, and consequently are rich in fossils of creatures in the sea both large and small. We only find small ones, generally shells and worms, but operators of rock-crushing machines at the Victory Lime Work here occasionally comes across those of large dinosaurs. I look for some of these but it is not my day.

We learn many things in Music. We compose short passages, identify intervals, follow the recorded music on scores, and learn the harmony and history of music. Some of the composers about whom we learn are Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), Paul Hindemith (1895–1963), Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) and Arnold Schönberg (1874–1951).

We learn about the development of the structure and form in music, for example the sonata. We learn about the Hindemith's opera *Mathis der Maler*, and about Schönberg's dodecaphonic scale, the word which means that it has twelve tones.

For English we study among other things James K Baxter's poems, Swarthout's *Bless the Beasts and Children*, Frederick Forsyth's *The Day of the Jackal* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

In his *Bless the Beasts and Children* Swarthout had struck deep into American value. The bloodthirsty killing of buffaloes in the name of sport is one fact that Swarthout criticised on American society. This killing of the buffaloes is shown in parallel with children being killed emotionally by their parents.

Swarthout tells us that in American society, children are being starved of love and affection from their parents. The attitude of American parents that money can buy happiness, and that they can buy their children the materials goods rather than give them their love and time is yet another fact which is criticised by Swarthout.

The Americans tend to live in the world of fantasy and make-believe. This attitude comes through the media, films and television, and is inherent in their myths and legends. This has a great effect on their children for they will believe and follow what they see on the films.

Swarthout stresses the importance of leadership when Cotton says that he is the only one who could control the group and make them succeed and become independent. The other children follow him at first. Then Lally 2

becomes the first one to prove his independence when he decides to go on without him.

To show us how important it is for us to protect the wild life of the world and make better environment for our children, Swarthout wrote the lines that begin with 'O twayne me a twim, where the ffubalo jim', which is to be the parody of 'O give me a home, where the buffalo roam'.

In effect, he shows us through his novel how sick is the American society. Every one of the children is good enough and has full chance to succeed, and yet everyone had failed from the American point of views. He wrote, 'Competition would horn them down and tall them up', 'Competition inevitably divided the deviant from the normal, the loser from the winner', and 'Incentive was thus inherent in the system as it was in the American way of life'.

In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the idea that 'things are not always what they seem to be', plays the most important role. To start with, we hear the witches at the beginning of the play saying, 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair'. Macbeth also says it himself, 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen'.

Duncan trusts Macbeth as his most faithful soldier, but the latter betrays and kills him while he is sleeping. Duncan's words,

> There is no art
> to find the mind's construction in the face.
> He was a gentleman on whom I built
> An absolute trust.

are alternated immediately by Macbeth's entering the scene. Things are not what they seem to Duncan.

The clothing imagery emphasises that reality and appearance are not the same.

> The Thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
> In borrowed robes?' (I.III.109–10)

Antitheses are also often used for the same reason.

The use of supernatural forces translates evil into the metaphysical, that is outside man's control. It also telescopes the time.

The time imagery, that is to say, the metaphors related to time, is found throughout the play.

> Had I but died an hour before this chance,
> I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
> There's nothing serious in mortality: (II.III.91–3)

And when he was told by Seyton of his wife's death,

> She should have died hereafter;
> There would have been a time for such a word.—
> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing. (V.IV.17–28)

The Wheel of Fortune turns from good fortune to misfortune and back again. Examples of misfortunes are death, disaster and tragedy. Disorder and order, these are antithesis to each other.

War is comparable with storm because it is a social disorder while the latter is a disorder in nature. War is a national disorder whereas storm a natural one. Tragedy involves a fall from praise and position of power, a noble figure who may be attractive, a floor of personality and character, outside forces, and the disaster of the protagonist.

In London during the 18$^{\text{th}}$ century before David Garrick (1717 –1779) appeared on the scene, over 200 performances of *Macbeth* in 41 years had followed D'Avenant's version which shortened and reworded almost the whole text. Flavour of language had been sacrificed for the prosaic Restoration clarity. For example, D'Avenant changed the texts into the following.

> *King*: What aged man is that? if we may guess
> His Message by his Looks, he can relate
> The Issue of the Battle!
>
> *Malcolm*: This is the valiant Seyton
> Who like a good and hardy Soldier fought
> To save my Liberty. Hail, worthy Friend,
> Inform the King in what Condition you
> Did leave the Battle?

Garrick would have nothing of this. He restored the Shakespearian reading.

> *King*: What bloody man is that? he can report
> As seemth by his plight, of the revolt
> The newest state.

Malcolm: This is the sergeant
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou did'st leave it.

D'Avenant's inexplicable alterations are due largely to his zeal in elucidation. Shakespeare's texts are full of obscurities and ambiguities in language and thought. This equivocation is his strength as well as his style. Even the titles of his plays say all this. For example, the title '*The Midsummer Night's Dream*' can be interpreted in at least four different ways, namely 'the Midsummer Night *is* Dream', 'the Midsummer Night *has* Dream', the possessive 'the Dream of Midsummer Night', and 'the Night's Dream of Midsummer'. By using the apostrophe, he makes the title of his plays change its nuance beautifully. This becomes even more obvious in the case of *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Again, in the D'Avenant version, Lady Macbeth speaks after having read the letter from her Lord,

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
What thou art promis'd: Yet I fear thy Nature
Has too much of the milk of human kindness
To take the nearest way: Thou would'st be great,
Thou dost not want Ambition, but the Ill
Which should attend it: what thou highly covet'st
Thou covet'st holily; Alas! thou art
Loth to play false, and yet would'st wrongly win!
Oh! how irregular are thy Desires?
Thou willingly, Great Glamis, would'st enjoy
The end without the means! Oh haste thee hither,
That I may pour my Spirits in thy ear:
And chastise with the valour of my Tongue
Thy too effeminate desires of that
Which supernatural assistance seems
To crown thee with.

This conveys only the literal sense of the Shakespeare's words, but misses the poetry by a mile. Here is how Garrick's restoration runs.

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor–and shalt be
What thou art promis'd. Yet do I fear thy nature:
It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great,
Are not without ambition, but without

The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly
And yet wouldst strongly win. Thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, 'thus must thou do, if thou have me
'And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
'Than wishest should be undone.' Hie thee hither
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise, with the valour of my tongue,
All that impedes thee from the golden round
Which fate and metaphysic aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Tension is a word which recurs in any discussion about drama. It is the setting of situation in which we cannot know what is going to be next. It makes the audience of the play wait with great anxiety, for we do not know what will come next. Usually it is used at the point just before reaching the climax of the story. It is often carried out by the hesitancy in the character's decision the effect of which can make the situation better of worse.

The first decision comes to us after Macbeth has heard the prophecy of the witches and he considers killing the good king Duncan. The tension becomes more and more intense when he knows that his way to the throne is blocked by Malcolm, and when Lady Macbeth tries to persuade him to kill Duncan. This tension leads up to his murdering Duncan, after which it is resolved.

After that, another tension is built up when he and Lady Macbeth hear the knock at the gate. This is resolved with the discovery of the king's body and Macbeth's coronation.

Tensions also build up in their own imagination from the guilt and the fear that their hideous deed shall be discovered. These are resolved by Lady Macbeth's and Macbeth's deaths.

The tension in the banquet scene is resolved with Macduff joining Malcolm and comes back to revenge. There is also a tension while we wait for each of the prophecies to come true, and this is resolved when it does.

We had a drama test about tensions in *Macbeth*, and I have not done well because towards the end of my essay it must have been me who wrote the following.

The tension in Macbeth's dream led to his second meeting with the witches that give him another three prophecies. The tension from the second prophecies he had given that become more intense when we heard the news that Birham Wood is removing to the castle (that is including in the prophecy) and when he heard the last revealing of the prophecy of 'men of woman born' led to his dead. The tension when Macduff refused to come to the banquet that led to the killing of Macduff's family later. The tension from the news

that Banquo is dead but his son, Fleance, escape make Macbeth to be more sinking in his own degradation of his mind and led to his dead at the end.

There you go!

What I really meant, however, was that Macbeth's meeting with the witches gives him three more prophecies among which is the one where the Birnam Wood moves to the castle. The revelation to the prophecy *Men of no Woman-born* leads to his death, and so on.

We plot the graph of Macbeth's fortunes and compare this with the graph of his courage. And I draw the stage settings for the Act II Scene III of the play. I put a well in the middle. Behind the well are two crenellated walls, one behind another, with five torches on them. The walls end at an angle tower on the left.

To the right of the well is another wall where there is a gate. On top of this gate is the room where Duncan sleeps.

It was Scotland in 1745 when the scenes of *Macbeth* took place. North Berwick is east of Edinburgh on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth, on the place were East Lothian is now. The location of Fife remains unchanged to this day, which means that it extended from the northern shore of the Firth of Forth up to the Firth of Tay. Glamis is not far to the west of Dundee. To the east of Inverness, on the eastern shore of the Moray Firth, is Culloden. Killie Crankie is to the south of Blair Atholl now.

Macbeth, *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, and most of Shakespeare's historical plays are based on the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1578) that was written by Rapael Holinshed (*c.*1520–*c.*1580). The same is also true with the plots of the plays written by other Elizabethan dramatists.

For his *Macbeth*, Shakespeare modifies the material that he takes from the *Chronicles* because his concern is in the personal aspects of the murder and treachery rather than politics. In Holinshed's work Duncan was a meek and rather weak king, he and Macbeth are cousins, and Duncan died in an ambush. Under the Scottish law of that time Duncan may not name his son to succeed him as a king, and therefore it was Macbeth who had the real claim to the throne.

Original sin is the idea that people put themselves before the other, that is to say, that they are selfish. An example of this is the Christian believe about paradise and the fruit. The three traits characteristic to man, namely ambition, intelligence and weakness, are a three-pronged weapon because neither does intelligence imply wisdom, weakness gentleness, nor ambition virtue. In other words, the fool is foul but fair.

James Keir Baxter (1926–1972) was a son of a self-educated Otago farmer of Scottish descent and his wife who is a graduate in Old French from Newnham

College, Cambridge, whose father is a professor of English and Classics at the University of Canterbury.

According to himself, his tutors were Aphrodite, Bacchus and the Holy Spirit, 'but the goddess of good manners and examinations passes withheld her smile on me', he added. Later he became a Catholic, engaged in social work, and then left NZ for Jerusalem. He once said, 'One of the great crimes of society is to be poor'. I learn his poem, the *High Country Weather*, with my English teacher Mr Lonsdale. It begins with,

Alone we are born
    And die alone;
Yet see the red-gold cirrus
    Over snow-mountain shine.

One favourite theme of his is the conflict between bodily desires and religious believes, in other words between earthly love and transcendental love, as can be seen in *The First Communions*,

'Men! You men! You don't know how it is:
How every woman is torn in half between
The conscience and the flesh. We roast in pain,
God's whores, each one of us, burnt black by kisses.

This creates social problems, especial for young girls who then become frequently exploited and misused, as can be seen in the *Pig Island Letters* (1966),

Hoyoake yammering from a kauri stump–
God save us all! I need a stomach pump.

He portrays his identity in *He Waiata mo Te Kare*, that is *a song for an object of affection*, a song to his own wife,

Each grey hair in my beard
Is there because of a sin,

The mirror shows me An old tuatara,
He porangi, he tutua, †
Standing in his dusty coat.

Baxter knows much about the Maori people and culture, and about the New Zealand life style. In his *Inscription for the wall of a power station* he

† A madman, a nobody,

uses many Maori names, and has written a phrase in Maori which means that the water is owned by Pharoah, that is to say, the New Zealand government. Also in the same poem he tells about one of the unsolved problems of New Zealand, that is the unemployment, 'Today so many statistics of unemployment'. Death is to him like a returning home. He used to work in a TB hospital.

In *The Morgue* the patients shudder whenever they pass the morgue, 'The room where Death lived'. But when finally he, with broom and bucket, entered it, he found that there was nothing there to fear.

> ...Only the bare close concrete wall,
> A slab of stone, and a wheeled canvas stretcher.
> For Death had shifted house to his true home
> And mansion, ruinous, of the human heart.

He compares the plundering of a beehive by he and his friends to the rape of Carthage and Troy.

> Fallen then the city of instinctive wisdom.
> Tragedy is written distinct and small:
> A hive burned on a cool night in summer.
> But loss is a precious stone to me, a nectar
> Distilled in time, preaching the truth of winter
> To the fallen heart that does not cease to fall.

Carthage was in Africa. It was founded 814 BC, taken by the Vandals in AD 439, and annihilated by the Arabs around 698.

Troy was in Asia Minor. It was destroyed towards either the end of the 13^{th} century BC or the beginning of the 12^{th} century BC, discovered in the 19^{th} century by Schliemann.

Somehow the action of the bees that 'Stabbed, and died in stinging' reminds me of the *kamikaze* pilots and the suicide bombers of the Middle East, when 'yet still their suicidal live raiders dived and clung to our hands and hair'.

He tells us to take nothing for granted, as in the *Inscription for the wall of a power station* where he says that we should remember whenever we use the electricity all the work and the sacrifice of the workers to bring us our everyday comfort,

> When you plug the cord in for the electric toaster
> Remember the blood of men is flowing through it.

In studying a poet like Baxter, one looks both at the theme and those features beyond it. I like to call this theme the *first theme*, and all the philosophical as well as the interesting features beyond it the *second theme*. These

features are, for example, the atmosphere and character creation, didactic intention, expansion of consciousness, imaginative stimulation, ingenious plotting, insight into life and truth, moral teaching, political warning, sense of locality, and social comment.

The Day of the Jackal is a story about an assassin the identity of whom remains unknown even after his death. The idea and the theme of the story refer to the political history of France and Algeria after the Second World War, that is when the president of France was Charles de Gaulle.

He was a good president, but he also had many enemies. The main enemy of his was the Organisation Armée Secrète, which was a powerful group of terrorists backed up by many rich businessmen.

The OAS had tried several times to assassinate the president. Every time they failed. This makes the security measure by the French government to be tightened up the more.

The Jackal is chosen for the next attempt to assassinate de Gaulle. He is a professional marksman, an outsider for he is English, and speaks French fluently. Forsyth makes the character of his novel, the Jackal, both anonymous and mythic. He works alone and remains forever unknown.

His second character is a man who hunts down the Jackal, a hunter of the hunter. We stand by our protagonist because Forsyth has equipped him with an extraordinary ability and courage, and isolated him from the world around him. His technical knowledge of gun and mechanics is both detailed and definitive.

Algeria had been under the Ottoman Empire since the 16$^{\text{th}}$ century. The French colonisation started in 1827, and the country was taken by France in 1830.

During 1830–39 the capture of the capital Alger was held, 1839–47 the capturing of other towns, and 1852–1870 the total occupation. The provisional government of the French Republic was constituted in 1944.

It was Algeria that started the events on 13 May 1958 which are responsible for the fall of the Fourth Republic.

The five Republics of France are namely the First, September 1792–May 1804; Second, 25 February 1848–2 December 1852; Third, 4 September 1870–10 July 1940; Fourth, 3 June 1944–4 October 1958; and Fifth, from 4 October 1958.

On 1$^{\text{st}}$ November 1954 the Algerian rebels struck at the French in seventy places throughout Algeria, thus began one of the bitterest anti-colonial struggles in modern times. Recalled to command in May 1958 because of the Algerian crisis, Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970) approved the new constitution which founded the present Fifth Republic.

Being a military general, he surprised the *Front de Libération Nationale* (National Liberation Front) by offering the Algerians three possible choices, namely an outright independence, the integration of Algeria into France, or the Algerian self-rule with financial aids from France. The Algerians chose outright independence. De Gaulle became President of the France in 1959.

The *pieds noirs* rose against him in 1960 but were forced to give way. He proclaimed the independence of Algeria on 3rd July 1962.

The OAS was a murderous secret organisation which oppose with violence the Algerian independence after the military putsch of Alger (1961–63). It was backed by rich upper-class financiers and led by middle-class army officers who had served or lived in Algeria.

The majority of the members were from the lower-classes who had fought in Algeria. They were ignorant of politics and believed that they could turn the clock back and retain the privileges they had enjoyed before 1954. It was directed by the generals Salan and Jouhaud until the time of their arrest.

The Day of the Jackal is mainly set in the Continent. Most of the action takes place in France, and the assassination attempt was on Sunday 25^{th} August 1963 at the Place du Juin 18 in Paris.

Frederick Forsyth (b. 1938) was a Reuters correspondent and BBC radio and television reporter. He left the BBC in what he calls *a huff*, and until late 1969 had never written a word of fiction.

He was broke and lived on kindness in a friend's flat, then he sat down at his typewriter and wrote in 35 days *The Day of the Jackal* (1970), an immediate success.

The Odessa File (1972) he wrote in 24 days after 12 months of planning and research. Then he wrote *The Dogs of War* (1974) and retired to a farmland out of Enniskerry in County Wicklow, Dublin, before returning to writing again to produce *The Devil's Alternative* (1979), *The Fourth Protocol* (1984), *The Negotiator* (1990), *The Fist of God* (1994) and *Icon* (1996).

The Negotiator was written at the end of the Cold War. It has suddenly become a foreboding novel since the events in New York City on 11th September 2001.

A financier in the US masterminds a crime against his nations and the world by organising the bloody kidnapping of the son of the US president while putting the blame on the Russians. All this because he wants the Oil in the Middle East.

The same is the case with uranium as that with oil. Thus Iraq was for oil and Iran for uranium. Iran has its own uranium ores and mines.

We also study *An Inspector Calls* (1945) by John Boynton Priestley (1894–1984).

Priestley was born in Bradford, the son of a school master. At the age of 16 he began writing pieces for Bradford newspaper. He served in the army throughout the war of 1914–18. From 1919 he studied at the Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

His work, *An Inspector Calls*, shows us the apparent respectability and prosperity of the middle-class, and then reveals the rottenness behind the façade. He could well have written this play wholly from experience, since he fought in World War I and wrote it towards the end of World War II. The play is a warning to the whole of Europe of 1912, and to the world in general during 1939–45.

Arthur Birling gives us a hint of something amiss.

> A man has to make his own way–has to look after his family too, of course, when he has one–and so long as he does that he won't come to much harm. But the way some of these cranks talk and write now, you'd think everybody has to look after everybody else, as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive–community and all that!

His words are immediately replied by those of the Inspector Goole, who says that everybody in the Birling family is involved in the death of Eva Smith.

> There are millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives their hopes and fears, their suffering, and chances happiness, all intertwined with our lives, with what we think and say and do. We do not live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other. And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish.

And rightly he was, because we have been taught it in fire and blood and anguish.

The importance of community and common interests is the theme of much of Priestley's work. The play is set in 1912, when men like Arthur Birling talked confidently about the future, unaware of the disasters that would soon arrive.

After the Inspector has left the room, everyone falls into discussion and divide themselves into two groups, namely those who feel guilty and those who do not. It is the younger generation, Sheila and Eric, who feel guilty whereas the older generation, for example Mr and Mrs Birling, try to forget that the thing has ever happened.

Some of the themes of this story are the sharing of guilt, generation gap, social justice, and class complex. As Shakespeare has said, 'Fair is foul and

foul is fair', it is difficult to draw the line between right and wrong. Sometimes there is only a fine line dividing the two.

> *Gerald*: After all, y'know, w're respectable citizens and not criminals.
>
> *Inspector*: Sometimes there isn't as much difference as you think. Often, if it was left to me, I wouldn't know where to draw the line.

This story follows a typical line. One may look at it as having a structure of four parts, consecutively exposition, complications, crisis and denouement.

From the beginning is the exposition until Inspector Goole appeared at the door. Then the story changes into the complications, until Eric entered and everyone stared at him when it then changes again into the crisis which ends when Inspector Goole told everybody to share their guilt.

Until now the degree of interest of the story has always risen, but after this it falls as it enters the denouement phase which reaches a minimum when the character of the Inspector was questioned. The degree of interest rises again towards the end when Mr Birling answered the telephone and told everyone that there is a police inspector coming.

Few people read poetry after they leave school, equally few read plays or go to the theatre, but a great number continues to read novels. Each novel has its own meaning, plot and purposes.

In *Bless the Beasts and Children*, Swarthout sets his story at Grand Canyon in order to make a contrast between this *Garden of Eden* and the cruelty of those who kill buffaloes as sport.

If we read it carefully, we will see that the story is not a mere alternation of events. What Swarthout tries to tell us is the vulnerability of our society, for example the lack of loving and caring between parents and their children, the value we put on winning, and the believe that only the stronger should live. The effect of this misconception in this case is worse than we could guess, that is the death of a boy.

Another purpose of a novel is to criticise the world's politics. We can find this in *Smith's Dream* by C. K. Stead. The name *Smith* is probably chosen by Stead for his main character for the reason that it is a very common name. One may compare him, as one reads, with any person one knows.

The story warns us about the American involvements. It also warns us about the spreading of communism. An example of the involvement of the US in many countries is shown in the following lines.

> Again there was silence, until Willoughby spoke again, 'I've been in this business a long time. Not just, Southeast Asia. South America too. All over in fact'.

The anti-hero in the protagonist makes it is easier for us to accept his action, since we sympathise with him. The following shows Smith's weak side.

> Sitting on the floor of Jesperson's office trying to clear his mouth of blood, Smith veered between two intense feeling, opposite yet closely connected. One–the negative–was a simple feeling of regret at having lost his tooth.

It is interesting to compare a film with the original story. Usually the book is more successful because good books always have at least two themes going in parallel with each other, and usually it is only possible to make the one in the foreground into a film. The other theme in the background is usually philosophical or contains some abstract ideas, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to put it into a film.

Comparing *The Day of the Jackal* with the film made from it, the book is definitely the more successful. The film is aptly done, however, and it is a good interpretation of the story by someone who has done his research and homework well. But in the film, for instance, the many interesting places are either reduced or lost in their details due to the lack of time.

Through the film we can enjoy watching the action of the characters, but through the book we may also join them in their ideas and plans. Tiny details are also easier to read than to watch. For one thing, the film shows things in two dimensions whereas the book shows them using only one, that is as a train of words.

The brain can turn both of these into a 3-d representation, but it is easier if the information comes in one dimension instead of two.

Information passed in 2-d is prone to losses. It also requires a more complicated technique both to pass and to process it. In 1-d, however, one may use all the available descriptive and narrative techniques to pass on the physical information with the minimum loss. As for the abstract ideas and philosophies in the second theme, these techniques in 1-d are perhaps the only way to pass them on.

The description and simple narration in the novel suits the Jackal's character. This is shown in the film by the use of no background musics.

Some symbolic landmarks are needed in the film in order to show that the scenes are in France. The high-angled shot of the Jackal is to make it appears as a narration. We merely watch him doing things, and are not involved in what he does.

The film dices a story into small parts and then assemble some of these parts together to make a smaller physical model of it out of them. Some of the details are changed to make the end product coherent and appealing to the eyes.

Often the time duration of events, or even their order, is altered. The Jackal's false name is changed from Paul Oliver Duggan in the novel into Alexandra Duggan in the film, probably to make it easier to remember. In the film the Jackal crashed his car, but not in the novel.

On 22 January 2003, I watch at the Japanese Film Festival in Bangkauk the film *Juni Nin no Yasashī Nihonjin* the English title of which is *A Gentle Twelve*. It was made in 1991 by Nakahara Shun.

Written by Mitani Koki of the Tokyo Sunshine Boys, the film is adapted from the *Original Nuance* also performed by the same group in Shinjuku.

This film in many ways resembles *An Inspector Calls*. It is a story of twelve people of different professions who are called to act as a jury to decide whether a woman is guilty of murdering her divorced husband, or whether her pushing him towards the on-coming truck was an accident.

The tension among the jurors keeps building up, then relaxes, and then builds up again until it reaches at times an almost unbearable level. All the various contradicting conference techniques in the unique style of Japan are shown in a greatly exaggerated proportion, and thus the amount of frustration resulted is hyperbolic. These techniques are namely *dango* (mutual consent), *danmari* (silence), *kakehiki* (tactics) and *nemawashi* (pre-acquisition of vote or consent). In the end the most seemingly virtuous among the jurors proves to be the most subjective and biased.

As Gandalf says to Frodo in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*,

> Many who live deserve death. Many of those who died deserve life. Can you give it to them? So do not be too hasty in passing your judgement on other people.

Compare this with, 'Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.' (John, 8: 15)

In *An Inspector Calls*, Inspector Goole points out the sense of shared responsibility and the guilt of everybody, but he puts no one in jail and the real inspector never arrives on the scene.

When the police tells Mr Birling over the phone that there is no Inspector Goole, the people in the room are divided into two groups, namely those who still retain the conscience and feel guilty and those who feel relieved. While those of the younger generation, for example Sheila and Eric, have wronged society and behaved badly, they are the ones who are capable of feeling this sense of shared guilt. The adults, however, are too rigid in their attitudes to learn any lessons. One may say that it is mainly them who have driven Eva Smith to her suicide, but they seem on the surface to be very helpful and never feel the guilt themselves. The hope for the future lies only with the young.

The Jury in Shun's film acts likewise, for in the end the verdict passed is that of 'not guilty'. The man is dead, and the evidence and witness are by no mean conclusive enough to justify the possible death penalty of his past wife.

Shared guilt is the thing for the living not the dead. We cannot bring the latter back to life, but we have to live with the past mistakes and must make sure that they are never repeated. Murders are a mistake, and we must learn from them through our sense of shared responsibility so that the same or similar thing shall never happen again. The *Original Nuance* seems to be influenced by Priestley's play.

There are several types of figures of speech or imagery, for example alliteration, assonance, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification and simile. These are the more formal figures of speech.

Other techniques are either informal or are used only in word-play, for example idiom, colloquialism, slang, swearing, blaspheming, spoonerism and malapropism. Spoonerism is the swapping of consonants.

Malapropism is the use of wrong words. It is perhaps one of the easiest and wittiest among word-plays, sometimes too easy you do it unnoticed or without realising it. Half of the contents of the junk mails forwarded to you by your friend at the turn of the third millennium are malapropisms I am sure, one example of which is what I have recently received, '[Shakespeare] wrote tragedies, comedies, and hysterectomies, all in Islamic pentameter'. Another example is 'The hypothesis is the largest side of a triangle'.

A middle-aged woman teaches English in the evening to children younger than me and she says I could come along. Ritchie is doing Fifth Form and he also is here. So along I come quite a few times, and quite enjoy learning with her.

But we do here only things necessary to pass the School Certificate, and it is unbelievable how the Fifth Form and the Sixth Form English's can be so different. While the former is all about grammar, the latter is literature and writing. I still prefer to read Shakespeare, poetry, and literature.

It is either here or in my 6E1 class that I come across the word *ambidextrous*. Ten years from now I gradually become one.

In Art History, we learn among other things Egyptian and Greek Arts, Realism, Pointillism, expressionism, Surrealism, neoclassicism, cubism and Abstract Arts.

We study works by

Giovanni Bellini (*c.*1430–1516),
William Blake (1757–1827),
Jérôme Bosch (*c.*1450–1516),
Sandro Filipepi Botticelli (1445–1510),

François Boucher (1703–1770),
Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564),
Paul Cézanne (1839–1906),
François René Chateaubriand John Constable (1776–1837),
Gustave Courbet (1819–1877),
Salvador Dalí (1904–1989),
Louis David (1748–1825),
Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519),
Edgar Degas (1834–1917),
Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863),
Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528),
Paul Gauguin (1848–1903),
Giotto di Bondone (1266–1337),
Jean Boulogne Giambologna (1529–1608),
Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828),
El Greco (Dhomínikos Theotokópoulos,
1541–1614),
Jean Auguste Ingres (1780–1867),
Charles le Brun (1619–1690),
Holbein (Hans) le Jeune (1497/ 98–1543),
Édouard Manet (1832–1883),
Henri Matisse (1869–1954),
Claude Monet (1840–1926),
Plabo Ruiz Picasso (1881–1973),
Camille Pissarro (1830–1903),
Raffaello Sanzio Raphaël (1483–1520),
Auguste Renoir (1841–1919),
Auguste Rodin (1840–1917),
Petrus Paulus Rubens (1577–1640),
Georges Seurat (1859–1891),
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901),
William Turner (1775–1851),
Willem Van de Velde le Jeune (1633–1707),
Anton van Dyck (1599–1641),
Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), and
Diego de Silva Velázquez (1599–1660).

Examples of these are Rodin's *Le Baiser* (1886), Manet's *le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1862), Seurat's *Un dimanche après-midi à la Grande Jatte* (1884–85), Van Gogh's *l'Église d'Auvers-sur-Oise* (1890), Gauguin's *Femmes de Tahiti* (1891), Ingres' *La Grande Odalisque* (1814), Picasso's *Guernica* (1937), Giambologna's *The Kidnapping of a Sabine Woman* (1579–1583), Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, Michelangelo's frescos on the Sistine Chapel's ceiling, Cézanne's *Les Joueurs de Cartes* (*c.*1890–1895), Delacroix's *La Liberté Guidant le Peuple* (1830), Dürer's *Mélancolie* (1514), and David's *Les Sabines* (1799).

We also learn about the Parthenon (447–432 BC), the Pantheon (built 27 BC, destroyed AD 80, restored by Publius Aelius Hadrianus, AD 76–138), and the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns. Monet's *Impression, soleil levant* (1872) has given to his school the name *Impressionism*. The idea of a world within world can be seen in Courbet's *l'Atelier du Peintre* (1855). This is the same theme and method as the one used in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Jostein Gaarder's *Sophie's World*.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) lived during the reign of two monarchs, namely Elizabeth I (1533–1603, Queen of England 1558–1603) and James I (1566–1625, James VI of Scotland 1567–1603, James I of England 1603–1625).

Elizabeth I of England was childless and therefore was succeeded by James VI of Scotland upon her death in 1603 because he had some rights to the English throne.

Macbeth is thought to have been written between 1603 and 1606. The first recorded performance was in Spring 1611, and the first Folio published in 1623. The theme about the legitimacy of succession to the throne may have been for political reason, considering the coronation of James I of England in 1603, the same year that Shakespeare began working on the play.

At the time of the second world war, New Zealanders used to speak very similarly to the English. But only a generation later they began to use their own accent, for example pronouncing *muwk* for *milk*, *skuwk* for *school*, and *aowps* for *Alps*. The *l* becomes very nearly *w*. This is because they try to open the mouth very little.

We have quite a few copies of the Reader's Digest in our house. Dad likes reading these. I only read some of them. I find that they are a little difficult for me.

Now, I cannot remember where I had seen or heard the following story from. It is said that when an Aussie comes to New Zealand he invariably laughs three times at any one of the Kiwi jokes he hears. The first time is when everybody gets it, the second time a week later when he thinks he gets it, and the third and last time a couples of months later when another Kiwi finally tells him what it really means.

It is ideas, and not events, which shape history. Events are mere facts whereas ideas are the philosophy behind them. Events either occur intentionally or accidentally. If they are intentional then they come from some idea. Even unintentional events usually comes indirectly from certain ideas. For example, for a coup to fail there must be the intention to carry it out in the first place.

Our philosophy leads all our action. It shapes and guides our thoughts. Action is only an approximation of thoughts, and events are only approximations of action. It is our ideas that have divided the world into two opposing camps, that is the West and the Eastern Europe. Wars happen only because

we follow different philosophers; they Karl Marx (1818–1883), and we the Greeks.

According to the theory of percolation in networks, the property of each network is determined by its underlying structure and the interconnection among all its components. I maintain that these structures in physics are equivalent to the structures we find in social science.

The structure of our society depends on things some examples of which are the level of the distribution of power, the importance one places on education and research, and whether one emphasises researches in pure science or in technology.

In the percolation theory, the structure of a system determines its history. Events are only important if you look at them collectively not individually, and then again they are governed by statistics.

On the other hand, the structure of the system determines the statistics that govern the events. An empire falls because it deviates from its robust self or structure. For example, the efficiency of its method of power distribution may not be able to catch up with its size when it has become larger. Such thing has happened to the Romans before.

Another thing which often causes changes to occur is the change in the ideas in the offspring. When the new generation deviates from their ancestor in their idea and philosophy, the structure of the social system changes.

But I know not why I should try to explain this to you. If we accept in the first place that ideas shape events, then even if all events shaped history the ideas would still shape both the history and the events that shape it.

On the other hand, events are history, and they are directly shaped by languages. In the first place, in order to make a war one would need to talk to each other to form a troop and to reason with members of it to convince them that they must attack the other party.

But language is only the translation of ideas. It is the messenger of our self. So in the end ideas still shape the history because they shape the language, which in turn shapes all the events, which in turn are equivalent to the history.

Yet on the other hand, history is written by historians in one language or another. Therefore you may say that it is historians who shape the history as we know it.

These historians, however, are also writers since they write the history that we read. Now, it is necessary and prerequisite that a writer must have some ideas no matter how well or absurd, and that their writings are but approximations of these ideas.

Therefore historians, who shape the history, write the history that is shaped by their ideas. So in the end it is their ideas that shape the history or at least

their version of it. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

Southwest of Ashburton, on the coast, is Timaru in which a family of my host family live. They are Hank, Carole, Allan, Linda and Tony who live in a lovely house.

There is here a living-room with thick carpet on which I lie down to play the computer games with Tony, who is younger than me, while a big aquarium stands towering behind us.

Linda moves to Wellington to work. A few years after I have left New Zealand she is married and moves again to Singapore to work at the New Zealand Embassy there.

Weekend Star, Saturday 21st May 1983, has a picture of Steve Davis (b. 1957) with the magic cue in his hand, crying over his own success. The Ashburton Guardian, Thursday 26th May 1983, shows a picture of students painting the T block at Ashburton College.

Art nowadays has changed a lot from what they were a century ago. Now we can see wherever we go, from countryside to big, noisy city, artists both professional and amateur sitting on the ground or standing in front of their easel sketching, drawing or painting.

During the time of the Egyptian Empire, artists used to be under the power of the ruler. Their work had to be strictly in accord with the rules that were accepted.

In Greek, artists became freer than they used to be. Their art became more and more imaginative, that which we know now as the Classical Art. They created their world the way they thought it should be not in the real world but in their legends.

Long after the Greeks and the Romans lived, artists again began to put their own ideas into their arts, for example Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo and Raphael.

These people had made many discoveries that paved a large path for generations to come. Now artists may choose from the many ways open for them to choose, for they work for their own satisfaction not their patron's. There are, for example, experimental and abstract arts.

We may divide artists today into three group: firstly, those who admire the Classical Art whose works look back to that period; secondly, those who draw typical pictures, for instance landscape and portrait; thirdly, those who still do experiments on art to find out their own artistic ways which often they themselves do not know where it will lead to.

We are going to go roller skating tomorrow, 28 May 1983. Tonight I am going up to Christchurch with Kelly and her host dad, host sister and her friend. After tea Andi and Frana drive me to Kelly's place by the coast.

None of us know the way and we nearly lose our way. But we go by the map.

On our way to Christchurch we pass Rakaia.

At the skate ring there are many people whom I know. There are Smith, Wayne, *Nāuï*, his mom, Zainal from Malaysia, Adam and an AFS friend from Japan.

Skating is fun but difficult because I have never done it before. At first I do some tests by sliding back and forth a few times just outside the ring. This done and feeling that I could get by, I get into the ring. I move very slowly along the rim at first, and all seems well.

But as people around me are moving faster than I am, I gradually go faster and faster. As the results, I fall down more than ten times.

There is a break for some competition, but I only watch other people compete. We are at it for a few hours.

On our way back I fall asleep most of the time. Back at Kelly's place I go straight back to my bed room. Instead of going to bed I read a book on Geology for a while. There are School Certificate exams coming up soon.

The following day is Sunday. I walk from the house out into the farm, until I reach the sea. After having taken some photos I try to walk back on tip-toe because I want to take some pictures of the sheep. I try not to frighten them, but they are frightened all the same. May be it is because the red jacket I wear.

Kelly has three sisters in her host family, that is Nikki, Joan and Mandi. Joan can tap-dance. Everyone here studies or had studied at Ashburton College. Kelly is also doing the Sixth Form at school, but she is in 601 while I am in 602.

Kelly's host parents are Kelwyn and Barbara. They live in a place called Dorie. Kelwyn shows me his farm. From him I learn that wheat feeds people but oats are for the sheep.

And electrified fence cuts across the field of oats, separating fresh fields from the grazing sheep. Break feeding works by gradually withdrawing this fence away from the sheep into the oats. In this case the fence moves towards the sea.

He has altogether at least three saloons, two tractors, four motorcycles, one harvester, one boat, one truck, a petrol station and an aeroplane. Farmers here are usually rich people. I cannot help but envy Kelly sometimes that she could live with such a rich family as this where there seems to be no lacking of anything.

I help him swapping tyres. These are exchanged diagonally in pairs, between the front left and the back right ones as well as between the front right and the back left. He does all this in his own workshop. Like shoes, the two

sides of a tyre often wear out unequally. In this case the inner sides has worn out more.

And here there is a billiard table. I have a go at it with Kelly. She tells me that in the US the high school lasts four years, and is easier than in New Zealand. In Daiï there are six years. Similarly in New Zealand there are also six years, up to the sixth form that is. The Seventh Form is more like a first year at the university, and is done only by those who intend to attend the latter.

The six years of both Daiï and New Zealand schools are divided into two parts, 3–3 in the former and 2–4 in the latter. So high school can be said to start from the M4 in Daiï or from 3rd Form in New Zealand.

Form 5 students study for School Certificate, Form 6 for Sixth Form Certificate (SFC) and University Entrance (UE) while Form 7 students study for UB and US which are probably University Bursaries and University Scholarships respectively.

The University Entrance Board looks after the latter three of these, that is the UE, UB and US. Subjects in examinations are English, Accounting, Applied Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Classical Studies, Economics, French, Geography, German, Greek, History, History of Art, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Maori, Mathematics, Music, Physics, Practical Art, Pure Mathematics, Russian, Spanish and Technical Drawing. Most but not all of these subjects are available for all the three exams, for example Pure Mathematics is possible only in the cases of UB and US, not UE.

Lion has beaten Bay of Plenty at 34-16 and Manawatu at 25-18. On 31 May there is a rugby match between the British Isles, aka Lion, and Mid-Canterbury at Ashburton Showgrounds. A ticket for student costs one dollar.

The Lion takes the lead during the first half at 10-6, and goes on to win the match at 23-6. With plenty of gap in the score it is a boring match.

For the Second Term I have a violin lesson in May on 30th at 10.20, in June on 13th at 11.20 and on 20th 9.00, in July on 4th at 9.40, on 18th 10.00 and on 25th 10.20, and in August at 11.20 on 1st and on 8th at 9.00. Holidays are on 6 June, Queen's Birthday, and 7 July, Mid-term Break.

School is closed one week for exams from Wednesday 1st until 8th June.

On Saturday Grandma takes me to see a boat race on Rakaia River. She is mum's mother while dad's mother is Nana to us.

The race starts from Rakaia coming upstream to Methven where there is a break for lunch and then go downstream back to Rakaia again. I feel no anticipation for the results, however, since I do not know any of the participating racers.

We sit in the car while Grandma drives to Methven. I ask her a few times

to stop the car to take picture. The film runs out while we are watching the race.

She takes me to Mt Hutt Hotel Lodge but they have no 135-24 films there, so that is the end of photography for today, which is rather fortunate since otherwise there would have been more pictures of nothing but the boat racing.

I am taking a lot of pictures because I plan to have them printed together in proof-sheets each of which contains perhaps thirty pictures in the actual small size they appear on the negatives. I have seen these proofs at Professor Jone's place. He explained to me that you select from the proofs only good pictures to enlarge, the rest of them you leave alone. He said good humouredly, 'The secret of taking good pictures is to take lots of pictures and then choose the best ones'.

I do not think I agree. I am rather meticulous when it comes to taking pictures. I want all of the pictures that I take to be good enough for anything. This is of course a tall order, so I am always disappointed.

Mum has joined a local Maori dance group. She dresses up in traditional costume and performs a graceful dance using the poi balls.

A poi ball is a ball pendulum hanging from a woolen bobbin and used in Maori dances as accompaniment to the singing. One is held in each hand and swung about, a graceful sight to see. It is made by braiding strands of wool together in black, white and red. The loose end of the braid is then tied up and gathered into a ball. Then you make thick layers of tissue paper and wrap these around the ball and tie it with a woolen strand.

Friday 10$^{\text{th}}$ June I give a letter that mum has written to Mr Mathias and he signs on it, which means that I can leave the school at 11 am today to attend an AFS function and a Maori afternoon in Christchurch.

In the afternoon I go to Hga Hau e wha Marae. It is a Maori place that is currently being built. There are two important buildings. The first one is for living and sleeping in while the second and larger one for eating and dining. Formerly there used to be only one building, that is the first one. The second building has been added later to be used as a dining hall.

Inside there are wooden carvings. These are divided into two types, that is those which are painted red and those which are unpainted. The Maori builders tell us that we may not take pictures of the unpainted carvings, and that no women are allowed inside an unfinished building.

Maoris believe that a house being built is like a child getting born. A building has an end wall as its mouth, side walls as arms, a big pole standing in the middle as its heart which supports a long beam that runs the whole length of the building and represents its backbone or spine. Running from the backbone to each side are rafters to support the roof and acts as ribs for the building.

A building undergoing construction is like an infant, a virgin. Neither women may enter nor photographs taken, because these would blemish the baby. Both of these things are possible once the building is completed.

The morning of the following day we visit a dairy factory and milk treatments in Christchurch, and go to a multinational party in the evening. At the party there are people from many different nations across the world.

This year there are many Daiïs, especially so *Khmẹr* refugees who come from Daiï. Some have already been here for quite a while, others only a few years. All are friendly. After food there are performances from various nations. *Khmẹr* people's dances are similar to *raṃdaiï* (Daiï dance). Dancing with them is enjoyable. After the shows is the supper after which we come back.

In the afternoon before going to the party we ice-skated at a skating ring in Cashmere. Coming back we visit Jo, a Daiï student who studies at Cashmere High School where *Nāuï* attends. It is so exhausting to bike up the hill. The ticket for the ice skating costs $2.50.

On Sunday at about 11 am Scott says that we should go and do some hydrosliding. So three of us, that is Scott, *Nāuï* and I go. The Hydroslide is at the Elizabeth II Sport Centre which was built in 1974 for the British Commonwealth Sport that used to be organised every four years, similar to the Olympics but with a two year difference between each other.

The Sport Hall here is very large. There is a stadium for football matches and athletics, a swimming pool, a spring board, a diving platform approximately 15 metres high, a fifty metre swimming pool, a hydroslide, a squash court, *etc.*

Quite a few AFS students want to change to another host family. Sainal from Malaysia had breached a rule set up by AFS and only got away with it because of the help from the Malaysian Embassy.

He hitch-hiked from Dunedin because he did not like his family. When AFS learnt about his hitch-hiking they want to send him back, but he asked the consul of Malaysia to intervene and thereby could move to Christchurch.

I am not as lucky when it comes to my turn to have problems with some member of my host family. In my case I ask a counsellor. Then there are a few talks, some crying, and in the end I stay with my present family.

Determination is never one of my better traits. That is the matter with me. I have noticed that every time I become resolute enough to effect a change, things always get better. All the people I know who changed their family fare better now.

Another student from Sri Lanka was sent back after he was caught stealing a book worth less than a dollar. The shop called the police, and when AFS learnt about it he was sent home. Relationship problems may not be a folly,

but stealing is. It is one of those worser follies that one is better off without. It is true love too is a folly. But one would rather be within than without it.

The ticket to get into the sport stadium costs $3.50. Scott offers to pay for the three of us. One dollar is for the swimming pool. The remaining $2.50 is for half an hour on the hydroslide. Yes, half an hour and for each person it is timed. Within that half-hour I could play a little over ten times.

I meet one girl while busy playing the hydroslide. She is so cute my heart leaps and bounds when my eyes fall on hers. Upon asking, she is only twelve going on thirteen and is studying Form 2. Of course nothing comes of it.

At night we watch the film *Omen II*. As I write this on the television On 2 is showing the *Square Peg*.

Father sent a letter dated 3$^{\text{th}}$ June 1983 together with a draft of $210 to me. The brass band of my school in Daiï, Montfort College, has just won First in the national competition.

I used to play the trumpet in that marching band two years ago and still know almost everyone there. Many of my friends are still playing. A few of them were in my class 401 last year, which means that they must be now in 501. They perform superbly well and will go on to win First in an international competition for school marching bands in Netherlands for a few years in a row.

There have not always been peace between pakehas and Maoris. Since Captain Cook came here in 1769 English settlers had exploited the indigenous people and their land. Then the Treaty of Waitangi came as a surprise in 1840.

But treaty or no, there was warfare going on all the time between the two parties. The Treaty was always broken on the settlers side, which resulted in land wars the worst period of which was during 1863 to 1872.

In 1863 war broke out in Tataraimaka and Waikato which led to the battle of Orakau Pa in 1864. During 1867–68 nine of the ten British regiments withdrew from New Zealand. The tenth and last one went away in January 1870.

The land wars ended not because no more lands were taken from the Maoris but because the newer generation of Maoris changed their life style and adapted to the new society. The Constitutional Act of 1852 gives the Maori people full political rights.

Ashburton College Executive organises *Time Warp*, a school dancing in fancy dresses, on Wednesday 15$^{\text{th}}$ June 1983 from 7.30 to 11.00 pm. The ticket costs $2.50. Those who come dress in either ancient or futuristic costumes. You shall never could get in unless you first dress yourself up properly, or improperly for that matter, which in most cases seem to be the case in the usual sense of the words.

I dress in my national dress of Lā̱nnạ, now a part of Daiï, slack cotton shirts and trousers in very dark blue (jud mâuhâum). Mat is here too. He has on what I guess must be a national dress of Malaysia. Not two unimaginative people already!

I listen to Michael Jackson's newly released *Beat It* but could not catch a word apart from what is the title of the song, so I ask Philip my class-mate to help.

The song is interesting because even the title already contains a contrast between what it expresses and the meaning of each of the words it contains. The second verse is what one could say *deliciously written*,

> They're out to get you, better move while you can.
> Don't wanna be a part; you wanna be a man.
> You wanna stay alive, better do what you can;
> so beat it. Just beat it. (uh!) [sic]

The song plays with the meanings of the words by switching back and forth between the meaning of *beat it* as an expression and and as a phrase comprising *beat* and *it*. By doing it this way he effects subtle changes in the mood of the song. And indeed, 'Don't wanna be no part; you wanna be a man'!

Another thing is a contrast between two different meanings of the same word, namely *fair* which means *just* and also could mean *beautiful*. This word appears in the line, 'But you wanna be fair, just beat it ...'. Shakespeare also plays with the same word in a similar fashion when makes one of the witches in *Macbeth* say, 'Fair is foul and foul is fair ...' .

The *World Safari* is back again, in a theatre near you. The world seems to enjoy watching two nomads make a fool of themselves and let others know about it. Just what I need.

Today is a school workday of Form 6. Coming back from doing some gardening at Mr Reeves's place on Graham Street in Tinwald, passing downtown, I see the actual car used in the film. It is on its tour around New Zealand, having been borrowed from a museum in Australia. I take a picture of it, but it is a little against the light.

Ashburton is the only place that asks for such a replay of the film. I do not know whether we should be proud, but the car is a Daf 33 in case that would ring any bell.

I will have taken over thirty rolls of film in all during my time in New Zealand as an AFS student. To save money, I only have them developed here and plan to get all of them printed in Daiï.

I have those films taken on the Milford Track printed at a shop in Bạngkauk's Chinatown, and they come out in perfectly rich colours. Unfortunately

I have the rest printed in *Jiangmhăi*, at a shop in the middle of the town not far from where the monument of the three kings is today. The quality of these latter is shockingly bad.

Ironically for me it is an impossible transition when I go back from New Zealand to Daiï. I never admit this until it is too late.

We are an example family and I will never say I cannot adjust back to the life in my home country. That would be blasphemy verging on to profanity and I am patriotic. To have thought Ashburton College as a place which nurtures the mind while Daiï schools a factory for producing physicians would have been unthinkable. If there is anything I can do about it, then I never know them. One day when I am so worried with the certainty of the future I throw all the films and more than half of the pictures away.

I thought I liked basketball so I join a team with other kids at school. We call it Raiders. There is a subscription fee of $3.

At other times it could take a while the process of disillusion, but in this case it takes less. One afternoon we play another team and lost by more than 60 to nil, nothing unusual for us as soon it will prove to be.

During my school exchange week when I am in Christchurch I play in another better team where I am the worst player. Then I watch on as my team dogfights it with the other team as a profoundly equal. I, however, can do nothing apart from watching.

I go with the Physical Education classes to Mount Hutt on 4 August to ski. We meet in the car park at school. I arrive very early in the morning, but we have to wait longer for those who have not yet come with the school buses. There are students who have to spend two hours on the bus to come to school. This is a cold morning which later turns out to be a clear day.

When everybody has arrived, we all get into a bus. It takes us less than two hours to go to the ski field. At places along the way the road becomes quite steep, at places winding. Mt Hutt gives a good view of the Canterbury Plain below, a good contrast to itself.

When we arrive, whatever we do not have we have to hire. I hire everything.

I have never skiied before, so I learn how to form the skis into a v-shaped wedge and how to turn slowly by varying the pressure applied by both feet. This is already fun, I enjoy the physics involved.

Then I look up and see everyone skiing down the intermediate face of the slopes and it does not at all seem to be difficult. So I walk to the beginning of the cable lines, pull one, put the seat between my legs and let it pull me up until I reach the top of a slope to where I had wanted to come.

From up here it suddenly looks less easy, as though this was a completely different slope to the one I had looked at before. I suddenly feel that the slope

is too steep, that I will be able to control my gear to make it do nothing except leading me headlong in the quickest way possible downwards. The sense of control that I had felt when I began to understand how the wedge-shaped skis work has dissipated totally by now. There is only one idea in my head, and that is I will not be able to get down from here unshaken.

Still having my skis on I begin to go down slowly. I cross horizontally in one direction. Then I gain some speed and feel unsafe for I am fast approaching the far end still not knowing how to turn the blessed thing around and make it lead me in the opposite direction.

Only one thing seems to me to be possible in the immediate future. If I cannot turn, then at least I could veer slightly upwards while carrying on in the same direction in order to reduce the speed lest I should hit the side of the slope in full momentum and either fall off the mountain or hit a tree.

'It works!', I gleefully encourage myself. My speed decreases gradually until I finally come to a stop and would soon be going backwards the way I came, which is exactly what I want. But I would then be going with my back first, which is not at all what I want.

I know I should go onwards, but that is already out of question for I have by now reached the very rim. So I lay myself down on the snow, lift both feet up and put them down again with the skis in the position I want them to be, and then get up and go.

This is not the proper thing to do and I dread doing it again. Therefore the second time I try to turn around with the wedge, having gained some confidence from having done my first turn on this slope which proves that the quest is not impossible, even though it could be a little awkward and slow.

The wedge method proves unsuccessful at first. I fly down headlong and could do nothing except laying myself down again. This time I have to climb down twenty feet to retrieve one of the skis which happened to break loose. The second wedge proves a little better in that I can control my feet such that the skis would not detach themselves from my ski boots, or even if they did they would not go on their own as far. Yet the third wedge proves that the method is feasible for I now manage to turn.

Mid way down the slope a class-mate of mine passes me by, then stops and climbs up to where I am standing, right in the middle of the slope and out of breath. With her encouragement, and by trying to mimic her relaxedness on the thing, I soon manage to reach the foot of the slope with only a little over ten times of falling altogether.

We ski until it begins to get dark and we are told to make it a day. Once the last ray of the sun is gone from the face of the slope, the chill creeps in quickly in its place and I suddenly get cramps in my legs. I board the bus slightly battered, blistered, cramped, but limping along in good spirit. I have fallen down perhaps a hundred times over, but the ski trip has certainly been

enjoyable and a good experience.

This year's Senior Ball is to be held on Friday 19th August 1983, from 8 pm until 1 am. Karyn asks me if I want to go there with her, but I say to her that I do not think dad would let me. So she asks Simon and finally go with him instead.

Andy talks one night at the table about the Ball. Mum thinks I should go and dad agrees, but I think it is too late to tell Catherine that now. I want to go with Wendy, so I ask her when I see her whether she would like to go to the Senior Ball with me. But she decline, saying that she is already going with someone else.

Donna was with Wendy and she heard me asking her. One night she came around to our place in her car and ask dad whether she could take me to the Ball. In the end she picks me up for the Senior Ball, which is held in Sportmans Lounge, Ashburton Racecourse, and drops me off afterwards. It is the first time I dance with a girl and I do not know what to do. But it is a memorable night.

Ashburton may be a small town, but when the regional AFS director for South East Asia and the Pacific comes to New Zealand it is the first place she comes to visit. The town has just formed its own chapter which will be in operation next year when I will have already gone away.

The American Field Services or American Ambulance Field Services which was formed during Second World War is now American Field Scholar, exchanging high school students all over the world. China has recently accepted the programme and there is now an exchange of youth leaders between the US and Russia.

The programme works well towards a more understanding and peaceful world. It creates a chain reaction of good faith and friendship. Take for example my host sister Andy who spent last year in Daiï. This year her family hosts me. My class-mate now at Ashburton College, Philip, is going to Daiï next year.

The new Ashburton Chapter could come into being probably because of Mark who is going to be its first president. He had been an AFS student to the US. He and Andy know each other and I have learnt that he has been working as a manager of two different companies one of which is Woolworths.

Apart from AFS, New Zealand also has an Internal Agriculture Exchange Association programme whose students are paid while they spend their time here. The year 1985 is going to be an International Year of the Youth.

An Ashburton Guardian of 15 September 1983 has a column by Linda Clarke promoting the new AFS chapter together with a picture of me, Mark and Kelly.

There is a very strong wind on 21 September 1983. The northwesterly gale

exceeds 50 knots at times, according to the Ashburton Guardian. I have to lean myself forwards at an awkward angle when I walk home for lunch from school, going against the wind.

My body becomes nearly level. I put my arms slightly forwards to touch the ground, to get a hold the same way you do when climbing up the steep face of a hill.

At approximately the same time the glass window in the Netherby Bookshop was blown in. I see a few sheets of corrugated iron flying through the air like pieces of paper. Trees are uprooted everywhere, a eucalyptus tree blown over in Oak Grove. Farm buildings are flattened.

In Methven, northeast of Manchester, there was a power cut this morning which resulted from burnt conductors after lines had crashed together. Power supplies were interrupted in Lyndhurst, Montalto and Hinds when three power poles broke down.

With the average wind speed of between 60 and 70 kph (48 knots) the gusts have been described meteorologically as a severe gale, the result of an active front that crossed the Tasman yesterday afternoon. The Winchmore Irrigation Research Station recorded a wind of 57 knots or 106 kilometres per hour at 10.40.

After lunch, walking back to the school I simply lean myself backwards more than forty-five degree, cushioned in the arms of the wind and let it carries me forwards. My feet merely touches the ground, guiding the direction and checking the movements to prevent myself from flying forwards too fast.

The gale comes during the Term Exams which lasts from 20 to 27 September and are for Sixth Form Certificate from the school. These exams will decide whether on not one would receive accrediting, necessary in order to be qualified to sit the UE exams in November. Therefore many students are studying hard.

I have five exams to sit. English is quite difficult for me. One day before the exam I study with Mrs Hill at Tutangata English Night Class. She tells me how to prepare for *Macbeth*. She says that I should understand the whole story, then prepare a few quotes.

For poems I should choose one poet among those whose poems I have learnt. I choose James K. Baxter. Then I study three poems that he wrote, then find out the objective and summarise each one of them.

According to Mr Lonsdale 30 per cent will be for language while the rest, that is 70 per cent will be for novel, poetry, Shakespeare, film and literature.

In the exam on Geology one is given four samples, three of which are rocks while one of them is a mineral, and then asked to write for each one a short description and the name. Then one is asked to find the epicentre of an earthquake. There is also a section of multiple choice questions.

For Mathematics the exam is divided into three parts. I like doing exams back to front, so I do the last section first, that is the five big- and the five small problems. Then I do the 20 multiple choice questions.

In Music I complete the left-hand part for the piano, indicating all the chords. Another thing is to write a tune for brass instruments in basically eight bars, which I could not finish in time. For analysis one must choose to analyse one composer, for example Hindemith, Lilburn, Brahms, *etc.*

In Art History there are five questions the first and the fifth of which are compulsory while the rest are left to one's choice. Nine plates of paintings are given which may be used to aid the answering. The last question is on Seurat's *Grande Jatte.*

On Wednesday 21st September I have exams for English in the morning and Geology in the afternoon, on Monday 26th Mathematics morning and Music afternoon, and on Tuesday 27th only Art History in the morning.

For the only reason that its name starts with an *A*, Ashburton College sits among those at the head of the list of Universities Entrance Board Examination Centres. It is numbered 5, and only Akaroa, Alexandra, Amuri and Aotea come ahead of it. Even Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand, and Auckland South come after it, that is to say, at number 6 and 7 respectively.

Place names of New Zealand are in either Maori or English. According to the same list, there are no Maori names of places that begin with letters *B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J, L, Q, S* and *U*. Another rule of thumb that I have arrived at is that, if a place name begins with *K, O, R, T* or *W*, there is a good chance that it will be a Maori word. There are overseas examination centres in Fiji Islands, Apia, Tonga and Cook Islands.

For a 6th Form student in New Zealand, after all the SFC and the UE exams are gone there is no more studying to do. Third Term exams, if they exist, are of no consequences whatsoever.

The Ashburton Tramping Club organises a trip to Arthur's Pass. There are altogether eight people coming. Apart from myself there are Leon and Sue Pasco, Sue McPike, Margaret Troh, Darryl, Alister and Ross. We set off from Ashburton on Friday 23rd at 7 pm and reach Arthur's Pass around half past nine.

Because we travel during the night, I could not see anything along the way. Ideally I would have preferred that we travelled during the day, because then one could see the scenery and the countryside along the way.

It starts to rain when we arrive. There is no time to light the fire. Anyhow we are going to bed, and it is not that very cold.

The following day is Saturday 24th September. In the morning we walk to a shop not far from the place where we stay. I buy a book about Arthur's Pass National Park, which costs $2.50. Then we tramp to Devils Punchbowl

Falls, and then go back to our lodging to have lunch.

In the afternoon everyone is tired and sleepy, at first no one wants to go outside. But in the end I go out with Darryl, Sue McPike and Margaret.

We climb up to Mt Cassidy Ski Field which is a small ski field not as big as Mt Hutt's. But it is more attractive because there are less people. There are only about ten people around.

Along the way here while we were walking there was snow as thick as half a metre in some places. The boots that I have brought along with me belong to Ritchie and are rather too small, so I only have on my feet the pair of shoes that I wear to school.

We are back at around half past six or nearly seven. Alister is waiting for us with his Toyota, saying he is worried because we have been too long.

For Sunday 25^{th} we had planned to climb up to Avalanche Peak, but unfortunately there has been heavy snow since very early in the morning. There is at least five or six inches of snow down here in a valley. We will learn later that it also snows in Ashburton for the first time today.

We stay inside, go outside briefly for a walk and then come back because it is very cold. While we were outside, I saw a long machine with Caterpillar wheels trying to clear the snow away from the road. It worked from the east and travelled westwards, leaving a cleared road behind and heading against a wall of snow so thick you never could tell where the road was. The snow does not seem to lessen, and we think we may still have to remain here another day.

We stay in a hut the ceiling of which is about thirty feet above the floor. There is a loft where there are several double-decked beds. I think you call them bunk beds not double-deckers, because those are buses though we do not have them here in NZ.

There is a fire place in the middle of the living room which is spacious and above which there are no lofts. The side walls towards the road are made up of large panes of glass, from waist level up to the ceiling.

It was very cold when we woke up and first came down to the living room. But now it is warm and cozy because of the fire that is blazing in the fire place.

I like looking at the snow in the world outside and on the glass where it melts away in the middle of the pane, leaving only those parts along the frame covered.

Several keas jump around on the ground and on the window sills outside. They are native birds that are not afraid of human.

The forests in this area are called Beeches because the trees here are mostly beeches. This is a typically indigenous New Zealand forest.

In the afternoon the snow stops. The road has been cleared once and the newly fallen snow could not cover it out of sight. So we head back at around 5 pm and find ourselves in Ashburton at 7.

Alister drops me off at home. Mum gives him $15 for my trip. On the way to Arthur's Pass we went via Lake Coleridge and Lake Lyndon. We came back via Sheffield-Darfield and then hit the Christchurch-Ashburton road.

I always keep diary only of big, memorable events. Examination is one of them because I am always very nervous preparing for one, and no less so doing it. When I tried to memorise lines in *Macbeth*, I used to go downtown to walk around our only shopping area.

You traverse the whole place in no time on foot.

But I managed to find a few seats in various places. I would sit in one and then move to another and another, and so on, all the while reciting lines from the play only some of which are the following.

> Double, double toil and trouble;
> Fire, burn; and, caldron, bubble.

Exam time. Or indeed the following, which sounds better in the film than when you read it in the book.

> The weird sisters, hand in hand,
> Posters of the sea and land,
> Thus do go about, about:
> Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
> And thrice again, to make up nine:—
> Peace! — the charm's wound up.

These examples are only for fun and relaxing. The more important ones you probably already know. Wonder where my diary is. Oh, yes!

Exam Week

> Last week (start from Wednesday to Wednesday) we've got a really good event at school. Ha! It was exam ... a lot of them ... tons of them. That make me feel *so* sick. How come I am going to be survived from this bloody week, I thought on that Tuesday night just exactly the one before the 'xam. I can remember very well about that night ... Oh! what a lovely night when I just had a look at my school work (Math + Geology → On Wednesday) and it was nearly 10.30 when I realized that I had not done any swotting for both of them! It was too late; so go to bed, make your mind and body in pretty good state and

> then get up early and go to sit the exam *and* prepare your mind for what you will get for the result.
>
> After Wednesday there was not any exam until Monday and Tuesday and that was too long and make me nervous. So I went to Arthur's Pass to do some swotting there (it's true, please believe) and nearly couldn't get back to exam because of snow. But anyway I was there at school on Monday and Tuesday sitting 3 exams :– Eng., Music, Art Hist. I really want to carry on telling this story but it is late at night now, and feeling very sleepy. So, Bye ...

The results from my Sixth Form Certificate exams have come out and are not too bad. I got for English 32 out of 80, for Music 23 from 60 in written part and 26 from 40 in oral, for Geology 69 from 100, for Maths 82.5 from 100 and for Art History 45.5 from 110.

At this time of the year the South Island and Ashburton are having their first snow. It's snow particularly heavy at Arthur's Pass. There is going to be a tramping trip there this weekend, organised by the school. It will probably be cancelled unless the weather improves.

School Exchange Week is being held during the period 17–21 October. I go to Christchurch on Saturday, which is today.

At first the Ashburton Tramping Club was supposed to be going to Wilberforce for a tramping programme it organised. But dad said that it may rain on Sunday, which is tomorrow, and if it rains we would not be able to cross the river. So we have cancelled that tramping programme and go to Christchurch instead.

Staying with another family here, I am attending a school in Christchurch for the whole of this week. I will study at the Christchurch Boy's High School. It is Monday today, the first day at school. Michael, whom I also call dad, takes me to school and to see the head master. Then he takes me to see Paul.

During my first three days at the school I have not studied very well because unfortunately, or fortunately, there is an exhibition being held at the town hall. It is called Science Fair. So Keith and I go there together.

Keith is supposed to be my mate and counsellor. He introduces me to three students from Auckland, that is David, Peter and Scott.

On the fourth day I talk to some 3rd Form kids in front of a class. They are learning about Malaysia in their Geography lessons.

During the lunch time I visit Malaysian students, David and Solomon, in their flat where they live with three other students from Malaysia. In the afternoon I talk to two more classes of third-formers.

On the last day, that is Friday, I attend classes period after period. I visit

the Malaysian students' flat again at lunch time, and have some rice together with David and Keith.

The family with whom I am staying here has four members, Michael, Caroline, Kate, John and Liz. They have a dog they call Hiccup.

Keith like playing basketball and he is very good at it despite the fact that he is shorter than me and I am only five foot nine.

One night we play in a gymnasium so large there must be at least four games going on at the same time. We form an adhoc team all the members of which are better as a player than I am. We do very well on the whole, I doing nothing else apart from passing the ball.

Whether we win is of less consequence, it is a close match.

With Raiders I was a player and we did badly. Now even as I play I am merely a spectator, but we are doing well. Some people would think this is good, but I do not like team sports for the same reason.

November is full of events at school. On Wednesday 2^{nd} there is a 6^{th} Form maths test and on the 9^{th} Senior Prize Giving where I receive a minor, nondescript prize called the Certificate of Citizenship. School Certificate Examinations begin on Wednesday 16^{th}.

The school orchestra plays on the Senior Prize Giving. I plays the second violin. I also have a part-time job at a Chinese fish'n chips shop, chucking spuds into a potato peeler machine.

The shop belongs to Mr King whom I met one evening at the swimming pool where both dad and mum are coaches. It is called Snowdrop Restaurant, opposite the railway station. Despite the name, it is only a fast food shop with only a counter and no tables.

Sometimes when there are dimples in the potatoes you need to use a knife. On such occasion the evening of the day before the concert I accidentally cut my left index finger with the potato knife.

During the concert my index finger bleeds whenever I press it on the strings, and soon even when I leave it alone, thus worsening my already bad playing.

A highlight of the concert that evening is Russell who is also in my class of Sixth Form music where he also has a leading performance. He plays the bassoon and on this occasion a piece has been chosen such that he can solo, which he did marvellously well. He is a natural player, in so much as he is a natural composer in our class.

Russell is very proud of his family name which he says goes back to the 14^{th} century as one record goes, '*Bote the Flemmynge that woneth in the west syde of Wales*', in exclusively roman alphabet.

He was born in England in 1967 to English parents. They came over in a

ship during 1969–70 on a trip which took six weeks, and has ever since been living in Ashburton. They think that with a population of 14,000 Ashburton is about an ideal place to live in.

He said he wants to study Music at a university and he plans to do some research on the music of South East Asia, in particular Daiï. If he does, I am sure he will succeed where M. Gaston has failed.

At school there is some problem of students sniffing solvents. I have never come across one, but I know such problem exists because it was written in a leaflet given to parents.

Mr King must have lived here for more than twenty years. I found a piece of old newspaper in his shop the Snowdrop Restaurant, dated Wednesday, June 14, 1967 [sic] which depicts a Vietnamese father carrying his wounded son to an evacuation helicopter after a Viet Cong's attack of Thuan Nhon, a village 15 miles west of Can Tho.

The currency in use at that time seemed to be British but on the process of changing into dollar and cent. The net weights are given in ounce, the prices in shilling and old pence, but there are also prices in cent written in small letters placed under these. This indicates that the currency was going to be changed. The double pricing in two different currencies was in order to make this change a gradual one.

Advertisements in the Christchurch Star, Tues., June 13, 1967 [sic] shows Woolworths Supermarkets advertising Lux soap at 2 for 2′3 (two shilling and three old pence) or 22c, Brown & Polson wheat cornflour 1 lb. for 2′4 or 23c, Wattie's four varieties of canned roast beef and gravy at 3′11 ea. or 39c, it also says 'TV dinner, ready to heat' and 'ready to eat'.

Apart from these there are also Highlander Sweetened, Condensed Milk, 14 oz. for $1'10\frac{1}{2}$ or 19c and Wattie's Sliced Peaches, 16 oz. at 2′3 or 22c. Also the dates are written in what is now considered as American instead of English, that is to say,

As AFS students we are ambassadors to our respective countries. Our experience abroad is a valuable one which continues to influence us long after it has ceased.

James hopes that I will be able to perform a *haka* to my folks at home. But since Haka is a war dance, and the line is long, he teaches me some greeting words instead.

Tena ra koutou katoa
Haere mai e nga ...
Haere mai e nga iwi,
Tena ra koutou katoa!

It is a greeting and welcome to all, which he says he himself would never

be able to remember. So he writes it down and give it to me. 'And if you ever get stuck doing a haka,' he said, 'make it up!'

James plans to start a software house called Kiwis, supplying BBC programmes. He thinks I am lucky because I have already dropped Physics, and David agrees with him. I have not told them that the reason that I switched from Physics to Geology was not because of Mr Curry's teaching but because Physics is always taught at schools in Daiï whereas no Geology classes exist there. Nor have I told them that in my country all children have to study the same things disregarding their interests.

James is also quite philosophical for he used to say that life is a Yo-Yo, we are not alone in our universe, and each of us probably has approximately $2 worth of chemical in him.

Karen, on the other hand, lives in this world. As I have told her that I have a nephew back home, so she says she also has a nephew, two nieces and one step-niece. She expects to be an auntie for the fifth time soon. She likes swimming and travelling, so she enjoy going away with a team to a competition for a day. She trains everyday in a heated, covered pool.

Rebecca is in my music class. She also studies Geology with me. In fact I like sitting next to her in the class because then I could look at her lecture notes. She takes wonderful notes which greatly help me catch up with the class because sometimes I cannot understand everything Mr Vallender says.

Bronwyn is one among the six children in her family. She has two elder and two younger brothers and one sister, elder. Her dad was from North Island and teaching at a primary school in Marlborough when he met her mum who was originally from there. He is now the principal of a primary school in Ashburton.

She wants to teach in a primary school, but has not yet been accepted at a teacher's college, so she may try again. She likes word games, for example she says, 'Never $B^\sharp$. Sometimes $B^\flat$'. Always $B^\natural$. It is only a pity that I never keep in touch with any of my friends after I return to Daiï.

Robert Burns (1759–1796) has said something very touching on this issue, but which I have not yet heard of in full. Anyway, how could one expect a child like me understand this kind of thing? The following is what he says.

> Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And never brocht to mir'?
> Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And days o' auld lang syne.
>
> We twa ha'e ran a boot the braes,
> And pu'd the growans fine,
> We've wandered mony a weary fit,
> Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa ha'e paid'lt in the burn,
Frae mornin' sun till dine,
But seas between us braid ha'e roar'd,
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty freen,
An' gi'es a hand o' thine,
We'll tak aright gude wille wacht,
For auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

Kathleen has five sisters, Mary, Deirdre, Sarah, Teresa and Richeal, who live with her at her home in Rakaia. They have four horses and seven cats. Hers is called Smudgy who is a fat, ginger and white cat.

Carol is also in my class. She wants to become a primary school teacher because she says teachers are well paid.

Sox's name is Chris but we call him Sox all the same, and that is what he likes too. I do not have to tell you that he likes AC-DC for that is written all over his face.

He wants to become a Systems Analyst. He is sixteen, and has done athletics since he was five as well as rugby since he was six. He had been among the New Zealand Secondary Schools Athletic Team that went to Brisbane, Australia.

Undoubtedly many think his constitution is crazy, but I think I know better for he one day he said to me, 'He who waitith will get what he wantith so long as he workith like hellith while he waitith'. You can hardly see even a slight trace of derangement when he says this, but then again he has to conclude everything with, 'AC-DC rule undoubtedly'. He does not like Maths because Chris already does.

Chris is also in our Maths class, as you probably known. He was born in Auckland to a traffic officer who seven years later moved to Westport on the West Coast of South Island, which is known as Wet Coast for the amount of rain it gets.

They had some rough time there before his dad decided to shift to Ashburton, probably another reason why Sox, his best friend, suggests that I visit West Coast, saying it is a great country.

Chris likes oysters on cheese on toasts, baked in an oven for five minutes or until brown, dripping and crispy. He plays rugby, softball and golf but the best of all is softball, he said. He likes girls and suggests that I keep my head

up and look for the right one.

I never knows what he is talking about. Coming on seventeen, I still do not know what to do to your wife when you marry. But you cannot admit such shameful fact to Chris at my age. Without doubt I eye girls and know exactly how to make them melt in my arms.

There are altogether seventeen classes of Sixth Form, each with thirty students. Mine is 602, Julianne's 612. She likes skiing, tramping, ice- and roller skating. She knows exactly what she will do in the future. It is to be a telecommunication operator in the Royal New Zealand Air Force. I am sure one day she will be able to do it as she wishes.

On my birthday we have a party when Grandma also comes. I turn seventeen this year. Life is full of exciting things and promises. I shall never grow old.

Tracey is a 7^{th}-former but she studies in my Art History class. She is full of fun and a pleasure to be with. You do not feel down and out if you see her. She lightens up the heart of everybody around her. But once or twice I see her in a sad mood from which I really want to help relieve her but never know how to. She wants to become an artist of various techniques.

Toni is another student in our Art History class. She wants to become an interior decorator. She suggests that I ski at Mt Hutt, do some tramping, hiking and water-skiing at Lake Camp, all except for the first one of which I should do in summer as the winter is rather harsh.

Among Allison's interests are hockey and collecting New Zealand and British stamps, of which she has a very large collection.

She writes for Phoenix, our school page in the local newspaper. She lives in a mixed cropping, which means that they have both livestock and crops. There are around 1,200 sheep in her farm and the crops grown are white clover, wheat, barley, oats, and peas.

For pets they have Tip who is a young sheepdog and Oscar and Sammy who are cats. The lambing time is during the August holidays while for harvesting it is during January and February.

She wants to go to the Canterbury University and do either Biology or Botany. Then she wishes to work for the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Wellington.

She suggests that I walk the Lewis and Arthurs Passes. There are also the Hepburn, Routeburn and Milford tracks all of which have beautiful scenery.

At school there are five periods a day, five days a week. We study for each subject four periods per week. For Art History I study in 1-1, 2-2, 3-4 and 4-5, the first number being the day of the week and the second number the period of the day. For Computer Studies it is 1-5, 2-4, 3-5 and 5-2, for English

1-2, 2-3, 3-1 and 5-5, for Geology 2-1, 3-3, 4-2 and 5-4, for Maths 1-3, 3-2, 4-4 and 5-1, and for Music it is 1-4, 2-5, 4-1 and 5-3. This makes altogether 24 periods each 25 period week, and therefore I have a study hour every week that is sometimes spent in the library.

day	*periods*				
Monday	Art History	English	Mathematics	Music	Computer Studies
Tuesday	Geology	Art History	English	Computer Studies	Music
Wednesday	English	Mathematics	Geology	Art History	Computer Studies
Thursday	Music	Geology	(study hour)	Mathematics	Art History
Friday	Mathematics	Computer Studies	Music	Geology	English

School buildings are called blocks, each of which is run through by corridors that are lined on both sides by lockers and doors opening into classrooms. The blocks are named by the letters of the alphabet, and the classrooms by the block names followed by a number. The room for Art History is C1, for Computer Studies S9c, for English S5, for Geology T14, for Mathematics S19 and for Music either A4, A7, or A9. The study period is in R1 which is equipped with drawing tables.

It could have been decided among my class-mates even before I came that Philip would look after me in the beginning. Whatever it was the case, he has untiringly helped me much, especially during the first few months. People will see the three of us, including Roger who is his close friend, together quite a lot.

Roger thinks that good things come in little parcels.

Philip says that as his name may be rendered in Maori as Piripi, mine may be called Honore which I think means *honour*, an approximate meaning of my first name Kittisak.

'*Kia ora e Honore*', he wrote in my note book, '*Kei te tuhia ahau ki akoe. Kaua e tauhou ekoe ki matau i* Ashburton College. *Tatau e tatau*'.

My 602 class teacher, Mr Mathias, is also my Computer Studies teacher. The first thing he did was to assign Chris the task of looking after me through getting acquainted with the computers, a task which the latter dreaded.

Chris thought that my accent was very strong and difficult to comprehend. I think that it is more because I still had not grasped the Kiwi accent then.

But now that I have adopted the New Zealand accent, Philip, that is another Philip in our class where there are two people of such name, for one suddenly thinks that he can understand me much better than before.

He learns Pascal while I have been trying to learn Basic. I did try my hands once or twice on Pascal but still cannot understand it. Computer is still difficult because no one knows how one should learn it, since it is a totally new subject. Writers of textbooks in this field also have yet to learn how to explain effectively a procedural grammar.

Philip lives in a farm of 475 acres, which is mainly a sheep farm but also have 60 acres wheat, barley and other crops.

Neal and Janine are lovers. They are always in the arms of each other whenever they are together, which is most of the time. Both like roller-skating which they could do together at their skating lessons.

Neal's mum is Australian and met his dad in New Guinea. He has a brother, who is at the moment studying at a university, and an Australian sister.

Himself, he says, he was made in Australian and born in New Zealand.

One day he wants to visit his relatives in Australia. His granddad still rows a boat about two kilometres to do fishing while his grandmother can still jump fences. They are both 85 or thereabouts.

Wendy loves basketball, but she also likes skiing, and ice and roller skating. I feel attracted to her but she does not want to be closer to me than as friends. Being inexperienced I would not know anyway what being more intimate than friends means.

Brett lives in a farm in Hinds where I visit twice. He is a good student and his essays in our English class find very few, if indeed any equal. He collects stamps.

On his farm there is a migrating white heron which comes and builds its nest each year on top of a tree. Theirs is a beautiful farm, the road leading into which is private and lined with tall trees that act as wind breakers.

One day an object fell out of the sky on their land, a heavy metallic globe with thick shell the size slightly larger than a football and made in Russia.

In fact it was a part of a Russian space craft. Some American scientist came and cut out a piece of it to study and keep in their collection. They had to cut through a shell half an inch thick.

The Westcoast of South Island is often called Wet Coast because it is wet almost all year round. The weather is very much like a tropical climate. It is filled with forests or jungles, with large, deep rivers with plenty of water.

There are bars typical to the gold-mining era, which has a piano, a double-bass, a pool table, a counter, plenty of beer, the sound and the good and smoky atmosphere.

People living in Westport, for instance, fish for whitebait. Some work in factories, for example cement industry, others own or work in a shop. I come here with the tramping club.

Interesting places around Westport are the Ballroom on Fox River, which is an overhanging rock covering an area larger than a football ground, Sanardu on Bullock Creek where there is a grow worm cave, Shangy town in Greymouth where there used to be gold mines, Pancake Rock between Westport and Greymouth that has two blow-holes and a ten minute walking track, Coal town with its museum in Westport, and Lyell between Westport and Murchison with its gold mines and a 2-3 hour walking track.

The Show Weekend starts from 11 and lasts until 13 November. On Friday 11^{th} I meet with *Nāuï*, *Òn* and Scott at the bus station in Christchurch around noon. Then we go together to Addington Park too see horses trotting; Scott is driving. There we meet Jo together with the parents of his brother-in-law, whom he calls dad and mom.

At night we go to the Christchurch Methodist Church Hall where we meet many AFS students from the South Island, both those who come from Daiï and those who come from other countries.

Together we play games and talk among one another all across the hall. We finish between ten o'clock and half past ten.

I ask Scott's mom, *Nāuï*'s host mother, afterwards about the show tomorrow night when I plan to spin some torches again. I wonder whether they would mind having a performance which uses fire indoor. She says she will ring Peter tomorrow and ask. So to bed we go.

On Saturday we go to Hydro-slide in the morning with Survan from Canada and a girl from Sri Lanka. The tickets cost $3.50 each. There is a big swimming pool and another pool to receive people popping off from the chutes. We finish around 11.30.

At noon we watch Maoris doing Hangi. Then we have lunch which we have brought along with us.

After lunch everyone goes to Ferrymead, all except a few of us, namely *Òn*, *Nāuï* and his mom who have to go back and prepare things for the performance tonight, that is the Torch Dance and the Daiï Boxing. Mom takes us back in her car.

We come back to the Maori place again at 5.30 in the evening for the Hangi. In the hall there is a stage where we first we sit down and watch Maori dances. Then it becomes our turn to give the performances we have prepared in return for the hospitality received.

Most shows tonight are those by Daiï students. We have *kraḅĭ* (sabre) and *ḱạḅ saung mụe* (two-handed swords) dances, Daiï Boxing Dance, *moaï daiï* (Moaï Daiï) demonstration, *zōeng kratīḅ khậo* (the northeastern rice box dance) and *blaung fai* (torch spinning).

Everything is a success, especially the last one, Blaung Fai. I say this not because I performed that show but it is always an exciting show. It is also relatively rare, even to Daiï people. Now and again one may come across a similar performance in Daiï which uses a few different movements, but I can do more than ten different moves. I have never seen any school that knows as many movements as ours does.

As a principle none of us teaches for money. So chances are that there are less than a hundred people in the whole world who know how to do the Blaung Fai the way I am doing it tonight, and this is Christchurch not Daiï. We shake hands and thank our hosts for the hospitality and then adjourn to Peter's house for a party. Here we dance with great zest.

The *moaï daiï* demonstration I did with *Òn*. It begins with some jabs followed by *Hak Ngoang Aiïṛạ* (*Aiïṛạ*'s Trunk), *Śauk Klaḅ* (Reverse Elbow),

Càurkhè Faḍ Hạng (Crocodile's Tail), Kneeing and *Òn*'s seeming death, brought about by *Bặn Śiar Dośkarrṇ* (Beheading *Dośkarrṇ*).

Next morning, Sunday 13th, we canoe in Avon River inside Hagley Park. Then we play cards at *Nāuï*'s place. At 5.30 I get on the same bus as Kelly's, and find myself in Ashburton around 7 pm.

At the party I met Charlie who is one of the committee of Southerland Chapter. He introduced himself and later suggested on a piece of paper that I should come down as a guest to do the Milford Track, a trip he is organising for the students of his chapter.

'Be in Invercargill Thurs 1st Dec', the note says, 'Stay with us. Travel to Te Anau morning 2nd Dec. Start track that afternoon. Finish Monday 5th. Travel to Queenstown that evening See Queenstown Tues. then return home'. He wrote down his address and telephone number in Invercargill. At home I show the note to dad and mum. They call Charlie at his home.

On Thursday 1st December I take a train, the Southerner, from Ashburton to Invercargill. I meet Eric from Hongkong on the train. We sit talking until past Oamaru. Then we part to have lunch in our separate cars

After having passed Oamaru I find Judy and Kathrin sitting on the came car as mine. They both sit behind me, which accounts for my not seeing them earlier. Before we reach Dunedin I introduce Eric to them. Then we all move to where Eric is sitting to talk.

At Dunedin I get off to meet *Òn*. I say good-bye to Eric and come to sit with him. We joke with Judy and Kathrin. *Òn* is more experienced than I am in a matter of girls.

We arrive to find Invercargill overcast and the air rather cool. By contrast the weather was very nice in the morning. Charlie is there to meet us. *Òn* goes with his host family. Judy, Kathrin and I stay at Charlie's place. I share a room with his youngest son.

After tea we talk about AFS students who have been sent back before the end of their stay. We also talk about the coming-up bus trips which will take students from South Island up to North Island and vice versa. He does not agree with the idea because he thinks they are too short for us to see anything much.

I travel home from Queenstown by a Mount Cook bus.

At Ashburton College I learn the violin. I have learnt some of it for nearly a year in Daiï before I came here, but I have learnt a lot more here. Mr Slade is a professional player in the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. The first thing he teaches me is how to relax. I find it very difficult to relax my muscles properly, and can never do so well enough. But during the last lesson he gave me we played a duet together, and I thought I could get a glimpse of how it feels to play in a relaxed manner.

To properly relax there must be no tense muscles in your body. In particular, your neck, shoulders and limbs have to be completely relaxed.

This is the Third Term at school. This term I have altogether six twenty-minute violin lessons. The time varies and only repeats itself once. These lessons are in October and November, namely in October on 3rd at 10.10, 10th at 10.30, 17th at 9.10, 31st at 9.30, and in November on 7th at 9.50, and 14th at 10.30. The 24th October is Labour Day, so there is no lesson. The 14th November coincides with School Certificate examinations of Form 5, while 21 November with University Entrance and University Bursaries examinations.

Similar to most of the text books I use, my violin is borrowed from the school. The school uniform I wear is not borrowed but is paid for by the same. Normally students are required to buy their own uniforms. Used clothes are received and sold on Thursdays at between 10.15 am and 1.15 pm on 13 and 27 October and on 10 November.

Form 7 students are not required to wear uniforms at school. They are also the only people to have a common room. Being an AFS student I have the privilege that, even though I am in 6th Form, I am allowed inside the common room reserved for 7th Formers.

I have only used it once, soon after I arrived. It is spacious inside, with a coffee corner, sofas and plenty of places to sit. Teachers may not enter it without asking for permission from the president of Form 7 students.

When I was there, Sox was there too. He is my class-mate, but I think because he was with me he was allowed inside. Perhaps the rule is not so strict after all. Anyway 6th Former and 7th Formers are only one year apart, unlike 7th Formers and teachers.

Later I will always remember that Sox was sitting there with me in the common room because he asked me what song I want to listen to and I said I wanted to listen to Queen (1971–91), and he said they have none. So I said, 'Then anything will do', thinking to myself, 'Why bother asking if you don't even have a single song by Queen'.

Michael Jackson has recently released his single Beat It. I like the music video of the song that sometimes shows on the TV. Music videos have only come into being not long ago.

The first Aids patient in the US has just made headlines. No one would be able to imagine the scale of the pan-epidemic it would evolve into in twenty year's time.

Upon my request Philip writes down the words in the song Beat It for me. Then I find out to my surprise that 'Beat it!' actually mean 'Flee!'

He writes down another song for me, *Life Begins At 40* by Dave and the Dynamos, on 19 September.

I was feeling rather naughty so I went down to the Disco-tet;
I was sitting in the corner with a pretty little thing called Bet.
She had one arm on me shoulder the other on my arm,
I see she was surcoming [sic] to my old fashioned charm,
When a bloke who was bigger than a ten-ton digger threw me out.
And I told him, 'Life begins at 40, you wonder why you feel so naughty.
You may be getting on but you can't stop shaking your feet.
Your body sure is willing, even though your back is killing.
You may be 40 but you can't stop rocking to the beat.'

And so on. Then he is thrown out by Mick Jagger's ten-ton digger of a body guard, and afterwards by his wife's new man with the same description.

Fifteen years later in Japan I read a news where one Japanese boy was shot by a police in front of a department store. The police brandished his gun and says, 'Freeze!' I do not know if the boy saw the gun because presumably by then he had already started to run away from something. Sometimes you get involved in things you have not been involved in. Anyway he fled and was shot dead.

I was not there so I cannot say what really happens, whether the boy the police shot is a wrong person or whether he is the wrong one.

Myself, because I hardly watch violent Hollywood movies, I would not have known what that policeman meant when he said that word. More likely than not, I could have assumed that he said 'Flee!', which of course is just the opposite!

One thing more I will have happened to remember then, that is to a Japanese ear the letters *r* and *l* sound not similar but the same to the effect of which that unfortunate fellow earthling of mine would necessarily hear 'Fleeze!' and the accent would be on the double *e*'s not the *z*.

That's Incredible is a television series that shows incredible pot-pourris. For example there is a man who can listen to a record by reading the grooves on the disc. Without having been given any clue he could identify easily all the fifteen discs shown. Among these were Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite and the last and most difficult of all not a classical music but an American rhapsody, which he also identified correctly.

I join the school orchestra playing the second violin. Elaine is our conductor. I play so badly I think I should have been fired but for the fact that she is very kind. The important aim of all the music department's activities, namely the girl's choir, senior chorale and orchestra, is participation. Helping her is Vicki Thorpe, my music teacher. Elaine is the wife of my Geology teacher, Mr Vallender.

On 2nd December 1983 we begin our walk on the Milford Track. First we go in a bus to Te Anau where we have lunch. We sit in front of the Information

Centre waiting for Charlie. Asking Malcolm who is a host dad of Rose, he said that Charlie has to wait for some of the students from Invercargill because they have to wait until the school hour finishes.

I buy a souvenir book and talk to a staff inside the Information Centre who say that to walk the Milford Track one must board a boat at Te Anau Downs. So *Òn*'s host mum takes us there in her car.

The sky is overcast and it is drizzling all the time. We are the first ones to reach Te Anau Downs. Once everyone has arrived, we put all our rucksacks on the boat. We are given two oranges each. The boat takes a few hours. It ends at Glade House where we alight.

We are 28 people altogether. Normally only the maximum of 24 are allowed to walk the track each day. We distribute our food among us and start walking. We all rub lotion on our skin to drive away the sand-flies.

The weather is not good at all. It drizzles all day long. We pass through valleys where cliffs on both sides are lush with vegetation, cut at intervals by white long streaks of water falling down the rock face. This goes on for a considerable stretch of the track.

The surrounding is quaint, quite out of this world. Apart from the constant drizzle there is also some fog, which makes distant hillsides hazy to look at, and far away peaks obscure.

The air seems close to saturation. One feels the presence of tiny water particles lingering in the air, and cannot help but breath them in. The walking party automatically divides itself into groups of three to four people.

All around are thick forests. At parts they look like deep jungles with lichens and moss everywhere, on the ground, draping around tree trunks and hanging high up on the branches.

At one point we see a collapsed hut, supposedly what used to be an accommodation for trampers. Land slid from underneath it some time ago when there was a heavy downpour. Once it rained here six inches in a day!

We spend our first night at Clinton Falls Hut, or was it Clinton Forks. The hut has thirty beds and one kitchen.

Judy had trouble with blisters on her left foot during the day. *Òn* and I had to wait for her several times. She hopes tomorrow they will not be as bad as today. She comes from California.

Katherine, from West Germany, says she loved the trees and all the wild plants. But she hope it would stop raining. She wants to become a veterinarian but that would have to wait until two and a half years after she returns home.

Jane is local. In fact she is from Invercargill. She likes punk music and plans to go to Otago University to study English and Classics. She likes Bob

Dylan's songs,

> May you build a ladder to the stars and climb on every rung.
> And may you stay forever young.

Kathy comes from Lafayette, a commuter town of San Francisco. Her attitude towards life is rather interesting.

> I felt sorry for myself because I have no shoes,
> But then I met a man who had no feet.

One of the sayings she likes,

> I thought I was wrong but I was mistaken.

There is also Leigh from Te Anau who lives in Invercargill. He is still fifteen but wishes to do AFS over to America.

On the second day we have good weather. It is Saturday 3rd, December. We start at eight in the morning. I walk with Judy, Charlie and *Òn*. We stop very often to take pictures. I have put on my feet two pairs of socks because a slight burning feeling in my heels makes me fear that I would get blisters.

We stop for lunch at the Mintaro Hut and stay there for the night. The rugged face of a mountain nearby towers over the hut.

Nearby is the Lake Mintaro where the water is cold as ice. *Òn* and I find a spot where it is shallow and take a quick dip in the freezing water. We rest the whole afternoon.

The weather improves by and by in the afternoon. The late afternoon sun baths the rock faces in gold. Nearby mountain tops cast their shadow on the rocks.

The beds are two-tiered and stand in rows. The place is rather spacious and the ceiling high. One could easily walk around upright on the top deck. We lie on our beds talking and playing games.

Charlie is now 46 and works helping towards the welfare and rehabilitation of jobless people. He thinks that people are more important than money.

It was he who invited me over to do this tramping tour. We are in different AFS chapters. He runs the Southerland Chapter while I am an AFS student of the Canterbury Chapter.

He has five children. Ewen is the warden of the Clinton Falls hut. Kathryn works for Pan Am Airlines. Bruce is with the Aluminium Smelters plant in Invercargill. Garey and Melinda are both in High School.

Canterbury Chapter who looks after me comprises Joyce who is President and who also is responsible with regard to the Newsletter. Basil is Vice President as well as looks after the Fund Raising. Pat is the Secretary and looks after Selection. Dave is the Treasurer, Doreen Counselling Co-ordinator and Bill Assistant Counselling Co-ordinator.

School Liaison includes another Pat, Marion and Angela. Gill and Claire are responsible for host family finding, Mel student activities, John publicity and promotion, and Michael and Caroline also, fund raising. Leon looks after billeting business and Elaine catering.

Sandra is from Chicago. She is going to finish high school soon. She wants to go to university to study to become a teacher who teaches physical education. She wants to work with young and handicapped children. Like me, she is now seventeen years old and like me, she is the youngest of four children. She is truly a chatter box, Sandy is.

Anna comes from Invercargill. She wants to go to Japan with AFS next year. She likes travelling and all kinds of sports, tennis, skiing, swimming, netball and volleyball.

Dave is also from Invercargill. He is a chemical engineer and loves what he is doing. He said,

> Laugh, and the world laughs with you.
> Smile, and the world wonders what you are up to.

Lynda goes to Southland Girl's High School in Invercargill. She hopes to go to the US with AFS next year, and she wants to become a doctor in the future. Her favourite sports are tennis, basketball and table tennis.

The following day, Sunday 4$^{\text{th}}$ December, we start at eight. This is the most important day of the walk, or so Charlie says.

We are lucky because the sun is shining and the sky is clear. I walk with Jane, Judy and *Òn*. We have between six and seven miles to do, which is by no means much except that the path is uphill.

We trudge up to Mackinnon Pass on top of a mountain. It is quite windy and cold up here. There are stone-paved paths, a lake and a structure built of rock with a cross on top. The paths, lake and us are surrounded by tussocked ground.

Several keas fly about very low. When I sit down and stretch my leg, one grounds and busily pecks at my shoe. We have hot soup, then walk descend to Quintin for lunch.

Sand-flies everywhere. Can never do without the lotion.

We rest for an hour or so at a junction. To the left the sign says a path leads to Quintin Huts and Sutherland Falls, to the right Dumpling Hut, Boatshed

and Sandfly Point.

Sandfly Point is 32 miles from Glade House, Lake Teanau, via Mackinnon Pass. We stop to have lunch at Quintin Huts before taking a short walk to Sutherland Falls.

There is the Triple Falls, five minutes off from the route linking between Quintin Huts and Sutherland Falls. At one point a tuis walks across our path. It seems quite familiar with people and does not become frightened and run away.

The Sutherland Falls are truly magnificent. It consists of a single streak of water leaping down in three steps. It is very high and the water roars as it jumps down to hit the rocks at the bottom. Nearby, water splashes everywhere and wet all over your face. The excursion to Sutherland- and Triple Falls has taken approximately one hour.

Back at Quintin we are soon on our feet again. We spend the night at Dumpling Hut. There are at least seven or eight Kiwis around the hut. We hear their voice around 10 and 11 pm but could not see them.

Go to bed at midnight.

Monday 5^{th} December we start as usual at 8 am. We stop for lunch at Dough Boy and then walk another mile or so to Sandfly Point bordering Milford Sound where our walk ends. Here a boat picks us up and takes us to our bus on the other side.

The water in the sound must be very deep, considering the shear slopes that come down and abruptly meet the water.

The boat brings us to T. H. C. Milford. We walk to Milford Lodge to board our bus.

We have walked altogether over fifty kilometres. All the paths were in good condition and posed no problems.

The road from Milford to Te Anau is very beautiful. We stop along our way to look at the Chasm which lies between Milford Sound and Te Anau Down. It is a chasm of jagged-edged rocks cut through the ground and a waterfall.

At Te Anau we have tea, after which we separate from the group and go with Philip to Queenstown. Judy and Kathrin come with us. Philip shows us around Queenstown, but we could not see anything much because it is already getting dark. Before Queenstown we passed Frankton, after Arrowtown.

Queenstown is now a crowded international tourist centre. During the 19^{th} century thousands of gold diggers comes to Queenstown in search for gold in the streams. After the gold rush was over the inhabitants of the town had dwindled to less than two hundreds around mid twentieth century. Now tourism has replaced gold.

The view of the Remarkables with the deep blue water of Lake Wakatipu in the foreground is simply unforgettable. You can also take a gondola from behind the town up to Bob's Peak which provides a spectacular view. Queenstown's Motor Museum has a good collection of veteran and vintage cars.

By contrast Arrowtown has managed to retain its old charm. The main street here is lined with sycamores. There is the Lake District Centennial Museum an oldest part of which was built in 1875 to house a Bank of New Zealand.

The Shotover River saw during late 19th century the biggest gold rush in Otago which was triggered by a chance discovery by two shepherds in 1862. With its gorges and rapids today it is the playground of jet-boating. Edith Cavell Bidge provides a good view of the river.

Some 90 metres above Shotover River swings Skippers Bridge which leads across to the old Skippers town, a bleak spot where thousands of people in search for gold used to camp. In a few year's time the first bungy-jumping will be done here, but now there still exists no such crazy thing as yet.

For a long time the area around here has been a jumping-off point for trampers and tourists, for example those who want to walk the Routeburn and the Milford Tracks. But one day some people will take it literally and take to the bridge!

The next day Kathrin returns home by bus at 9 am. Judy decides to stay another day.

In the morning we look at the farm, that is a deer farm, sheep and crops. There are wheat, barley, lucern, flower for bees and hay. We look at the Kawarau and Arrow River, at the place where jet boats crashed against each other and five people died.

In the afternoon we do a tour of Queenstown. I book my bus ticket.

Then we go up on Gondola, take some pictures, and then go to the looking-out point to see the view of Coronet Peak and Remarkables, Milford Sound, *etc.*

After that we return home, go swimming and watch hay-packing. After dinner we play pool and piano before going to bed.

The following day is Wednesday 7th December. We leave at 9 in the morning, catch the bus coming from Invercargill at Arrow Junction. I travel with Judy to Twizel where we have lunch.

We change our bus. Judy gets a Mount Cook Line one which goes to Timaru while I take the one that goes to Lake Rukaki, Lake Tekapo, Geraldine and Christchurch.

I get off the bus at Ashburton and go to the post office where Nicki works. But it is closed, so I put my stuffs in her car first and then buy birthday cards

for Andy and Judy.

Back at home I do some laundry, write letters home and to *Kriyạ*, Charles and Charlie. I will send the letters tomorrow.

Recently there has developed in me an obsession in learning languages. Like all other novices in this area the first thing I want to learn is how to count from one to ten.

Starting from Malaysian it is *satu, dua, tiga, empat, tima, enam, tujuh, lapan, sunbilan* and *sepuluh*; in Javanese a similar *siji, loro, telu, papat, limo, enem, pitu, wolu, songo* and *sepuluh*; in French *une, deux, trois, quatre, cinq, six, sept, huit, neuf* and *dix*; in Spanish *unu, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis, siete, ocho, neuve* and *diez*; in Maori *tahi, rua, toru, wha, rima, onu, whetu, wuaru, igua* and *teko*; and finally in German *eins, zwei, drei, vier, fünf, sechs, sieben, acht, neun* and *zehn*. Voila! I am a polyglot now and wish I could be a good one.

Eventually all roads travelling northwards on South Island go to Picton where you get a ferry to go across to Wellington. The town lies snugly in the Shakespeare Bay. Two miles further from it is a small town Waikawa in a bay bearing the same name.

Towards the end of the exchange programme there is a tour of North Island for students living in the South Island and vice versa. The trip programme begins on Friday 9^{th} and ends on Saturday 17^{th}. The programme is as follows.

Friday 9^{th}	travel to Wellington
Saturday 10^{th}	Wellington–Otorohanga
Sunday 11^{th}	Otorohanga–Auckland
Monday 12^{th}	a day in Auckland
Tuesday 13^{th}	Auckland–Tauranga
Wednesday 14^{th}	Tauranga–Rotorua
Thursday 15^{th}	Rotorua–Hastings
Friday 16^{th}	Hastings–Wellington
Saturday 17^{th}	travel home

School mottos are often interesting. For a school in Te Kuiti it is *semper paratus*, that is 'always prepare', for Ashburton College *resurgamus*, or 'we rise again', and the emblem is suitably a phoenix.

We gather and go up together in a bus, and on 10 December 1983 are travelling from Palmerston North to Tongariro Park. I am billeted with Mrs Parker in Te Kuiti.

The next day we visit the Glow-worm Caves and have lunch together at the house of Mr and Mrs Stiles. Then we head for Auckland.

Eric comes from Canada and he speaks French. His favourite song becomes ours, which he teaches us and which we sing along together ever hereafter.

J'ai deux grand boeufs dans mon étable,
Deux grand boeufs blanc taché de noir.
J'aimerais mieux voir mourir ma femme
Que de voir mourir mes deux grands boeufs.

Those who cannot remember the words he teaches the accompaniment to keep them busy.

In Auckland we get on a boat and cruise around in the sea. We also go separately with the people we are staying with. The people I am billeted with take us windsurfing. The water in the sea is cold so I get to wearing a dry suit, but windsurf I cannot no matter how hard I try.

Auckland's Harbour Bridge was built in 1959. It links the city centre and the northern suburbs. It was originally built to accommodate four lanes. This was when it was 42 feet wide. Four more were added later to give a total of eight lanes. The bridge has its length 3348 feet, main span 800 feet and at high tide clears the water by 142 feet.

The sea off the coast of Auckland is sprawled with islands. The largest among these is Great Barrier Island. Some of the others are Kawau Island and Gulf Islands. These islands are lush and rugged.

On 13 December 1983 we all meet in front of a museum, the War Memorial Museum, prior to leaving Auckland. The museum stands on a park, the Auckland Domain

We go to Lake Taupo and Tauranga.

We go to Rotorua on the 14^{th} where we visit a place called Hells Gate. We have a barbecue party at the place of the people who board one of us, that is to say, *Tụ̆*.

We spend the night at Rotorua. I stay with Mrs Relph. The Relphs own a farm, a 1,500 acre sheep farm on the outskirt of Rotorua. The new tractor should have arrived today, but it is now coming on Friday instead.

Maureen is a primary school teacher. She teaches third year students.

In New Zealand kindergarten begins when children are three and a half years old. But this is not compulsory. Primary school is compulsory for every five year old child, of which there are altogether six years. Then follow two years of intermediate school and then three to five years high school, that is until Form 5 or 7 respectively.

Their daughter, Susan, is spending her AFS years at this moment in St Louis, Missouri, the one place in the US that is rich in culture though people may not realise it even though everyone knows Mark Twain. Byon, their son, is waiting for his School Certificate exam results in January. He likes motor and mechanical things.

Rotorua means the 'second lake'. It has an area of 32 square miles and drains some 159 square miles of land. It flows into its smaller neighbour, Rotoiti, the 'small lake'.

On 15 December we visit the geothermal power plant at Wairakei.

Going from Lake Rotorua to Lake Taupo we stop at Huka Falls, which really are rapids rather than falls.

We reach Hastings on 16 December. Here we visit the Wattie's Can Food Production where staffs wear either blue or white gown and hard hat.

I am billeted here with another Japanese girl. We stop at Upper Hutt.

We are in Wellington on 17 December and cross the Cook Strait on a ferry back to South Island. It is a nice day and we are all out on the deck sitting in the sun singing AFS songs.

One such song goes,

Walk together, talk together,
O ye people of the earth!
Then and only then shall ye have peace.

Then it is followed with 'AFS is love. AFS is brotherhood. We are here for just one year to make our message clear.'

Other songs are, for examples, *Yellow Submarine*, *Rivers of Babylon*, *Auld Lang Syne*, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone*, *Blowin' in the Wind* and *Leaving on a Jet Plane*.

We all have been given a song book recently compiled by Marlborough Chapter. Among the songs in the book is Home on the Range, which appears in disguise in *Bless the Beasts and Children* which I have just studied at school. The song goes,

Oh give me a home
Where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play.
Where seldom is heard
A discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

How often at night,
When the heavens are bright
With the light from the glittering stars,
Have I stood there amazed
And asked as I gaze,
If their glory exceeds that of ours.

Another song called *Click Go the Shears* which goes,

Out on the board the old shearer stands
Grasping his shears in his thick honey hands.
Fixing his gaze on a bare-bellied 'Joe',
And if he gets another one, man, won't he blow!

Click go the shears boys. Click, click, click!
Wide is his blow, and his hands move quick.
The ringer looks around and is beaten by the blow,
And curses the old snagger with the bare-bellied 'Joe'.

In the middle of the floor on his cane bottom chair
Sits the boss of the board with his eyes everywhere.
Notes well each fleece, as it comes to the screen,
Paying strict attention if it's taken off clean.

The tar-boy was there and waiting in demand
With his blackened tar-pot and his tarry hand.
Sees one old sheep, with a cut upon it's back,
Here's what he's waiting for. 'Tar here, Jack!'

Shearing is all over, and we've all got our cheques.
Roll up your swag boys, we're off on the track.
The first pub we come to, it's there we'll have a spree.
And everyone that comes along, it's 'Come and drink with me!'

Or the song in Maori,

Te i wi te, i wi e te i we e,
Ta hu ri mai ra, te nga ka u e.

Ki nga ku pu, o te ro ngo pai,
Hei o ra nga, o te i wi e.

which means in English,

Now is the hour when we must say good-bye!
Soon you'll be sailing far across the sea.
While you're away, o then remember me.
When you return you'll find me waiting here.

Since the All Black has adopted it as their pre-match song, the enigmatic war dance Haka has come into play in every imaginable situation. It goes,

Kamate, Kamate, Ka-ora, Ka-ora
Tenei te tanga ta.
Pu hu ru hu ru
Nana rei tiki.

Mai whaka whiti te ra
Hupane, Hupane
Hupane Kaupane whi ti te ra, 'Hey!'

From north to south, national parks in New Zealand include Te Urewera, Egmont, Tongariro, Abel Tasman, Nelson Lakes, Arthur's Pass, Westland, Mt Cook, Mt Aspiring and Fiordland.

I know my Sixth Form results soon after I came back from the trips. My Sixth Form Certificate has written on it the date 18 November 1983, which is my birthday. Coincidentally that date is actually my seventeenth birthday.

I have satisfied the Sixth Form requirements in three of the subjects, namely Music, Computer Studies and Earth Science or Geology. In English my achievement is said to be adequate, and in Mathematics high.

My University Entrance Exam results, however, still leave much to be desired. I have gained credits in Mathematics and Music. In order to gain access to a university I would need to have a credit for another subject as well as another one for English.

I am disappointed with these latter results, but it could not be helped. Not that I have ever planned to go to a university here. One of the requirements made by AFS is that we return and stay for at least one year in our home countries after the exchange period. I do not know whether anyone would mind if I do not obey the rule but I am sticking to the agreement to the letter.

Apart from Mathematics and Music I had applied to sit two other University Entrance Exams, that is English and Art History. I failed English by a few points and chose to walk the Milford Track in place of sitting the UE exam on Art History.

Kelly passes her UE. She is also an AFS student at my school. There are only two, and I am the other one. She comes from Ellsworth, which has a population of about 60 and is near the National Park in Maine. She has come to love New Zealand and enjoys her time here. She wants to study international relations.

Before I leave New Zealand to go back to Daiï a journalist from a local newspaper comes to our place to interview and take a picture of me. The picture that he takes will turn out to be fine, but now when he is taking it I feel funny because he makes me hold a Kiwi doll very close to my face for the pose.

Taking photographs is my hobby, but I have never come across taking portrait photos until now. Despite his ability to take good pictures, he proves to be rather careless in details when it comes to writing his column. Both the first and the family names of Allister, my host dad, is spelt wrong.

Good pictures are no excuses because it is easy to get at least one good picture using a motor-drive. It is also fairly straight forward to write an interview column; just putting everything that I say already makes one such article. For example, I come from a family who owns a shop which sells wool in the northern part of Daiï, play the violin in the school orchestra, want to study engineering, answer with affirmation when asked whether I look forward to returning to my home country and that this is because I will be able to speak Daiï again then. And when I say that I leave with a mixed feeling, it appears as the title.

Monday 2nd January 1984, today I wake up early. I look for poles to make the torches for spinning, because Kelly said that Nicki's mum wants me to perform at the camp tonight.

So I cut some fresh wood from the creek in our camp. I only look for straight ones. I use the axe borrowed from Darrel's dad. I practise a little, then have dinner.

Kelly, Nicki and one other girl come to talk before dinner. Today Kelly's sister Jo comes to the camp with her boy-friend. I show them where Kelly is because they do not know which caravan is hers.

I go to Hank's place in the afternoon, and leave the sticks and the cloth for making the torches there. Then we go together in three cars to the Hadlow Games Park. The cars belong to Hank, Flana, the engineer and his wife. The Hadlow Games Park has among others, wallabies, red deer, emus, peacocks, monkeys, pandas, Thars, llama and American bisons.

Back at Hank and Carole's place we have a barbecue dinner on the lawn outside. Then I soak the the torches at both ends of the two sticks with a mixture of the same amount by volume of petrol and kerosine, which is the same as what I had done in my previous performance at Hank's place on New Year. Then we watch the slides that Andy has brought with her from Daiï.

Around 10 pm we are back at the camp. I spin the two torches at the children's playground because there are fences to prevent children from getting inside. Quite a few people watch me do the thing. I make the performance a rather long one this time, that is to say, between five and ten minutes.

When I have finished, dad says something. And then we come back to our tent. Kelly and the girls come around to talk for a while, and so does Linda. She was also there watching while I performed.

After that I take a shower and then come and talk with several people who are also staying at the camp. They say they liked the show. The children are especially excited. Whether the camp's owner was there I do not know. But I guess he was; only that I did not know him.

So, there you go! This is already the fourth time in New Zealand that I do the fire sticks. To summarise, I have performed at the Show Weekend

in Christchurch, at *Ùaï*'s and *Tự*'s birthdays in Blenheim, after midnight on the New Year at Hank and Carole's place in Timaru, and here at the Selwyn Holiday Camp in Timaru where those who watched were people who stay at the camp.

In Daïï the fire sticks or *blaung fai* is never a major show. We only do it in between the more serious shows, for example the dancing or the fighting of the sabre, two-handed swords, wooden pole or *blaung*, wooden arm-guards or *māiśauk* and pole-hilted sword or *ngạ̄o*.

I always say to my audiences that the fire poles are only used for warming up and warming down. 'But their movements,' I would continue, 'are the same as those in all other Daïï weapons'.

In the 16$^{\text{th}}$ and the 17$^{\text{th}}$ centuries, during the *Ȧyudhyạ* period, this pole spinning could have been used for entertainment as well as for practising at those times when there were no wars.

But when I am abroad, for example in New Zealand, Japan, or England, the fire dance always becomes the only thing people are interested in watching. I guess that this is because it is beautiful, exciting, gentle and culturally neutral.

All *raṃ*'s or dances in Daïï Weaponry are slow, while the fighting require at least two persons to do, much concentration and, even with this, could be dangerous.

To perform the fights it is not enough only to have two persons who know how to use the weapons, but these two have to be from the same school or at least their weapon-wielding style should be similar. For instance, in two-handed swords you generally have two choices to receive an attack, that is either with the same hand as your opponent's, or with the opposite one.

For example, if your opponent attack you with the sword he holds in is right hand and you choose to receive it also with your right hand's sword, then this is what's called the *inner reception*. And the *outer reception* is simply the opposite to this, that is to say, when attacked on your right-hand side, say, you receive it the blow with your right hand's sword.

Our school *Śrị Ȧyudhyạ* never uses outer receptions, we always receive a blow to our right with the left hand's sword. One of our brother schools, which is in *Laṃbụn*, however, does just the opposite.

Myself I would never dream of performing with someone from this school. You never mix the inner receptions with their counterparts in Daïï sword, or you could get yourself injured or killed very easily, especially if you perform using metal swords.

Inner receptions facilitate your steps and make the two persons revolve around each other like double stars. You can, without much difficulty, dodge and then come up behind the other person's back, and this facility is of course

rather useful when you fight.

However, the outer receptions are quicker and easier to do, or so they say. The drawback is that you only walk forwards and backwards, never sidewise. So that you need a wide platform or a large hall to accommodate your performance. In other words, you cannot perform on the dance floor or inside a restaurant for pocket money. And that is a shame.

Apart from spinning the torches, I have done the sabre dance at *Nāuī*'s family's place, at a potluck tea at the Papanui Hall when we introduce ourselves, and at the Show Weekend, all these places being in Christchurch.

For the two-handed sword dance I performed at *Nāuī*'s house in Christchurch when I also fought afterwards with an imaginary opponent, and again at the meeting if AFS students from both islands which was held in Blenheim during the August Holiday, this time the imaginary fight being excluded.

The Daiï boxing I fought a prepared fight with *Òn*, also at the Show Weekend in Christchurch, when we prepared one hour, and practised only ten minutes before the show.

Flana sleeps in the tent outside with Andy tonight.

I wake up at around 8 am, have a shower and brush my teeth. I think we are going to the Peel Forest today. The weather is fine this morning. I have my picture taken in front of the caravan, with the spent torches from the performance last night.

Then we go to Hank and Carole's place. From there we go to Peel Forest. On our way we stop at the Geraldine Museum, which is a museum of cars, tractors, aeroplanes and machineries, all the types of which seem no longer in use nowadays. Dad explains to me how these things work. Then we finally go to the Peel Forest.

Today we also come in three cars, that is those of Hank, dad, and the engineer and his wife. We have our dinner at Peel Forest, and the walk to the Acland Fall.

Grandma has come with us, but she sits at the picnic ground and waits, instead of going for a walk. I think she is Carole's mother. Next to the picnic ground is the Rangitata River. This is a picnic area.

We go further to the sheep station of the family of one of the first settlers. We look at the church that was built by the Acland family who were nobles who came from England. It is a Anglican church. There is a big house in which Queen Elizabeth used to stay when she came to New Zealand. On our way back to the camp, I sit in the car of the engineer Allen and his wife.

Back at the camp I walk pass the playground when one of the kids aloud say, 'Hey!, this is the one that did the fire dance last night!'

I sit inside the caravan reading. Then Ritchie and Darrel come in to play

poker, so I go out and watch the television at the TV room. There I meet two girls who came from Christchurch, one of whose name is Jandy, and two boys. One of the boys came from Auckland. The other one, whose name is Brenn, came from Gore. He is going to be studying in 6th form this year.

After that I come back to the caravan to sit and read *Coma*. This evening we have fish'n chips for tea.

The couple who live next door to our caravan are going away tomorrow, and so they are packing up their belongings.

Wednesday 4th January 1984, it is 10 am when I wake up. I go to say goodbye to Darrel because his dad and his family are going back today. Our neighbouring caravan has already gone back to Christchurch, and someone takes their place before noon today.

My dad and mum go out together in search of Charlie's telephone number in Alexandra. They phoned, but he was not there.

Afternoon finds us in town, shopping. We look inside a souvenir shop. I want to buy a T-shirt, but there are no probable sizes for me unless these could have been OS and XOS, both of which are too large.

Back at the camp we watch on television the New Zealand Championship of outdoor bowling in Dunedin. This is already the final. The we talk with other Kiwis there.

The weather is not that well today, though it is by no mean too bad. Overcast sky in the morning later clears up, and there is no rain. We go to the bay, and board Mr Freeman's jet boat.

There is there a swimming competition in the sea inside the bay where everyone swims in a triangular circuit around three floats. Stuart and Fiona are competing, though they do not win.

This done, we come back to the camp where Andy makes some chips and we eat and then go to bed early. Charlie has called to tell that everything is all right.

I wake up early this morning, then go to the post office while mum goes to get the two rolls of film for me, Thursday 5th January. Then we go to the auction market for vegetables.

I board a Mt Cook Line bus at 10 o'clock. The bus goes along the Lake Pukaki. Then it passes Twizel where we stop for lunch, and then change into another bus, that is from Number 770 to Number 539.

Two girls, one Megan who studies 5th form at the Timaru Girl's High while the other, Lani, is also in 5th form but at the Mountain View High. The driver tells them to 'keep an eye on the Daiï boy', that is me. He fears that I will get on the wrong bus. Both of them are also going to Cromwell. They are going to stay with Lani's grandparent in Alexandra during the holidays.

To Twizel it is raining and clouded. After we have got on another bus in Twizel it stops raining, but is still overcast and quite cold. I meet an aged woman on the bus who says she had been to places all over Europe.

Charlie and Jeanette pick me up in Cromwell.

Between here and Alexandra is the construction of Lake Dunstan, the project of which started in 1977. It will begin to produce the electricity in 1987. They are building the dam gates now, and the road is also being raised.

Cromwell will be underwater when they have finished. This includes the many orchards that grow apricots around here. Some historic sites will also be buried, in particular an old cottage and tools of the pioneering Chinese gold-diggers who were the first to come here.

Around here is the McKenzie High Country where apricots grows well because of the very hot and dry summer. Very little rain falls here compared with the Fiordland and Invercargill; approximately 15 mm per year. Charlie says that it was very hot two days ago, with the temperature of 31–32°C.

At the dam gate I meet Megan and Lani again. We smile to each other and I introduce them to Charlie.

Charlie stops his car along the way to buy fruits and lettuces, and also to visit a couple who used to be AFS counsellors and executives. Both are pleasant to be with.

Lake Dunstan stretches further from Cromwell to Clyde where there is a dam gate. The nearer to Cromwell the more rocks you see.

We see the slides which Charlie had taken while we walked the Milford Track, and I show him the slides I have brought with me.

We walk around the camp, then go to see the Fun Night at the hall. Charlie have a talk with the owner of the camp about my fire-stick show, and they decide to let me perform tomorrow's night. Also we will try to contact *Òn* tomorrow, though I do not know where he is now.

We read for a while before going to sleep.

On the following day, Friday 6$^{\text{th}}$ January 1987, I wake up early. After lunch we visit *Òn* at Clyde where he stays with Ann's parents.

Here to Clyde I come with Charlie. We meet Russel, Ann, Jane, together with three of her friends and *Òn*.

Charlie, *Òn* and I go to play golf. This is the first time that I touch a golf club, let alone play with it.

At the golf course here in Clyde, Charlie plays with Russell and Ross. Russell stays at the Alexandra Holiday Camp now, while Ross is the host dad of Theresa who walked the Milford Track with us.

We play together the first round of nine holes, but the second round we play on our own at the practising area for beginners. *Òn* has played before, and he plays quite well. He can even drive whereas I only can chip shorter shots.

A round of golf is a good time for talking. This is why it is a businessmen's sport. *Òn* and I talk with each other about various things. He has experiences with girls and even have had sex with some of them. He tells me how to do it, but it is difficult to imagine such thing when you are still a virgin. He has told *Nāuï* the same thing, he says, and the latter had heeded his advice and will soon give up his virginity. This proves to be the case.

Myself I know I shall never be able to do it. I have often talked and laughed with girls, and I know they like me. But how do you go about asking them that we should have sex too? Forget about sex, how you cross the friendship-lover line, that is the question.

After golf we drink beer at the club's room where I also play with *Òn* two games of pool. Ross pays for these pool games.

Then we come back to *Òn*'s place to find out that both Russell and Ann have already gone out. Jane is here alone, so we tell her about *Òn*'s coming with us to the camp to give a performance, and that he will have tea there with us.

The music at the camp has started, but no one can be seen dancing for it is not yet the right kind of music for that. I find the two poles I need for making the fire sticks.

At the garage inside our camp I transform the poles into my performance equipments, half and hour before the appointed time. I make them quicker than usual.

After I have finished I soak them with the fuel mixture, then spin it outside for a while to get rid of the excess oil.

After that, each using one pole I perform with *Òn*. Then I with the two poles do the two-handed spinning alone. It is already past 10 pm by the time I finish, but it is still not that dark.

We carry on with our next show doing the Daiï boxing. One of us pushes the other with both hands, then again with one foot, and then there are neck-lock and kneeings, parallel kicks where you kick your opponent's side with your kicking leg parallel to the ground; *hak ngoang aiïrạ* where you grasp the leg kicking you in one arm and then hurt it with another; *caurkhẹ̀ fạ́dhạng* where you turn your body a full circle and then hit the other party while he is behind you; then reverse elbows and then we press both palms together and call it a day.

After the performance we dance at the Hall the entrance of which is free. At around 11 pm we return to Charlie's tent, talk together for a while and

then Charlie and I take the girls and *Òn* back to Clyde.

We come back about midnight, take a shower, read, and then at around one o'clock in the morning sleep.

Charlie's caravan is large. We sleep together in it, one on each side of the walls. We always read quietly in our bed for a while before turning our lamp lights off, say goodnight to one another and sleep. With them I can reflect.

Saturday 7th January 1987, I go to Clyde in the morning together with Charlie, Jeanette and Melinda. I stay one day at *Òn*'s place. We play tennis at a place a little further away from the golf course, then come back to have lunch, and then play volleyball and swim.

Òn's brother's name is David, who is cute. Jane's three friends are Maya who comes from South Africa, Cathy and Rachel.

Today's weather is excellent. We have the sun all day and it is hot. After lunch we swim, then play volleyball, and then swim again. Then we come inside and talk.

We play tennis again in the evening around 9 pm and, when we come back, again swim. Then I leave for the camp. Russel, Ann, Jane, *Òn*, Cathy and Maya also come along to see me back to the camp. At the camp I brush my teeth, read and then sleep around 11.

I like it in summer, even though it is hot. There is nothing like the heat of summer. Not only here in the Lake Country, but also in Daiï. The tropical Daiï summer is hot but not humid, and the whiff of heat you feel on your face under a hat, or the gentle breeze both dry and warm that reaches you when you sit in the shade, is so incomparably memorable. So we sat together in a summer house, with the light from the bright nature outside sifting in through the opened windows and doors, Maya and Cathy alternately drawing my picture in my friendship book.

Both girls are nice and gentle. I also feel that they like me, who like Jane who never loves me.

Nothing in the world is what you want it to be. Jane likes punk music, Oi, New Wave, Joe Jackson, Bob Dylan, and Beatle's John Lennon and George Harrison. She was sixteen last year and wants to go to the Otago University in Dunedin after her 6th Form, which is going to be next year.

Sunday 8th January 1987, we pack our things into the car in the morning, then leave the Alexandra Holiday Camp roughly at noon. We travel along State Highway Number 8 all the way until we reach a junction where we turn right. Here the left turn would have led us to Dunedin. We come on to Highway Number 1 before we reach Gore.

Along our way from Alexandra to Invercargill we stop at the Mitchell Cottage which was the home of a settler who came to live here because of the

gold in Central Otago.

There are three methods you may use to find gold, namely pan, sluicing, and water dredging the process of which uses mercury.

Houses are built of rocks bound together by mud. We stop several times to buy fruits from the various orchards.

At one such places is the cherry orchard where we pick the fruits ourselves and then pay at the owner's house. While inside the orchard we may eat the cherries as much as we want.

From Central Otago we come to West Otago. Plants grow superbly here since the climate is much better than in Canterbury. Farming is thus better because there is much rain.

We stop to look at the Roxburgh Dam.

At Invercargill we visit Charlie's mum. Charlie has brought along with him some fruits to give to her. We drink tea and then return to Charlie's place. I do not know why a highway here is called a 'State' Highway.

Charlie's work concerns with the unemployed. He finds jobs for them, or give them initiatives towards employability and employment. We also talk about people with dyslexia, whose condition makes them able to neither read nor write. These people are unable to spell and are totally word-blind, but their thoughts are otherwise normal. Some can write, but they can only write from right to left. Leonardo da Vinci wrote in this manner. But I think that his may be the case where you can also write normally from left to write.

When one can write equally well with both hands, writing in this reverse manner comes naturally, as I know from experience. I was not born an ambidextrous, but through a strange, persisting inner drive and practice I can now do most things equally well with either one of my hands. One day I found to my surprise that I could also write like da Vinci.

Charlie's son, Bruce, bought a vintage car Nash of 1930, which must be one of the later ones since vintage car means those cars manufactured between 1917 and 1930. It has costed him over NZ $5,000. He painted it anew and changed from 6 to 12 volts and 2 batteries.

On the following day, Monday 9$^{\text{th}}$ January, at 10 am I go with Jeanette's father and Melinda to the Alliance Freezing Co. which is between Inverness and Winton.

Before entering the place we all have to wear a scrub suit and a hat. We look at the pens used to divide the sheep into flocks according to the different farms from which they come. The sheep are herded around inside the small enclosure which keeps shifting along until finally they reach the entrance of a passage that leads them to the chain room where they are slaughtered.

The sheep are killed by shocking it with electricity at the nape of their

neck. The next process is to let all the blood drains. The carcasses are then skinned and the entrails separated and sorted into groups.

Everything up to this point is carried out in the chain room, the name of which probably comes from the chains used to hang the carcasses to the hooks on the conveyor belt above. The chain room is no place for women.

Sheep's brains are mostly sent to France where people like to eat them. We look at how the sausage skins are made from intestines of the sheep, the small intestines that is.

What remain that cannot be used are made into dried, crushed food for feeding animals. Bones are turned into bone dust, used as a fertiliser.

To separate wool from the skin, the latter is painted with sodium sulphide which free the roots of the hair, after which the wool can be pulled off with ease.

The wool thus obtained is pressed into solid bales using the wool presser. The sodium sulphide on the hide is washed off, and the hides themselves are graded into 90 different grades.

Similarly the wool is graded into 20 grades. Mutton and lamb are also graded. This information is fed into a computer which calculates the amount of money to be paid to the farmer, who receives the money the next morning.

Then we look at the process of making dried food by using a vacuum. The principle for this is easy. Water is drawn towards the ground by the gravity of the earth in the absence of air.

The AF slaughters between 20,000 and 32,000 lambs a day.

Back at Charlie's place I have lunch with Melinda. Then Charlie calls.

Nana, that is Charlie's mother, comes to pick me up. We visit a relative who lives in Woodlands in the country, Agnes and Philip who own a truck company. Their daughter lives in Christchurch with her Japanese husband. They own a restaurant that mainly does quick lunches. Jason their eldest son is five, and their daughter is two.

I go with Philip in his truck. We send lambs to the Alliance Freezing were I had just been in the morning.

After tea during the daylight saving time, that is around 8 pm, I go with Bruce and Sandy to Tiwai Point where the Aluminium Smelting plant is. Sandy is an AFSer from Chicago, and Tiwai Point is on the opposite side of Bluff across the Bluff Harbour.

We drive to the wharf to look at the place where they unload coke, pitch and aluminium. These then come along the conveyor belts to a covered area where they are kept in buildings 2,000 feet long. The distance they travel on the main rollers of the belts is approximately two miles.

We put on safety hat and glasses before we enter the plant where aluminium is smelted. Aluminium ore is melted in a blast furnace, then poured into huge ladles which tilts to pour the molten aluminium from their lips into a pouring end which is connected to the metal runner. The liquid metal runs along this runner and fills in all the moulds which are lined up in series. The ingots resulted are later stacked up in mountains outside.

We also look at the place where the coke is pressed. The smelter has a chimney stack 449 feet high and produces 244,000 tonnes of aluminium a year. The company is Australian and the workers here are well paid, approximately $500–1,000 a week.

Environmentalists here must have been busy in the 1960s. One of their masterpieces was over the issue of making hydro-electric power from the water in Lake Manapouri to power the aluminium smelter at Tiwai Point. When it became known that a plan was made to raise the water level of this lake by 90 feet, people protested. In the end a compromise was made by which the water in that lake is used to produce the electricity but the water level is still maintained.

I wake up on Tuesday 10^{th} January 1987 at 8 am, and at 8.15 Jeanette send me to the airport. There I wait for Charlie, and when he arrives, he buys the plane tickets for both of us to fly to the Stewart Island. It takes us 20 minutes to fly there from Inverness.

On the island we go in a passenger-van to the Halfmoon Bay in town. We walk to the City Council where Charlie has some business regarding the PEP. After that Mark, who is the Chairman of the work project in Stewart Island, drives us to the house on the hill where PEP people live.

Then he shows us the area around. We pass the Golden Bay and the Observation Rock, then climb up from the Halfmoon Bay up to the hill.

We go to the City Council and leave our things there. Then Charlie and I walk to the Museum of Stewart Island. We look at the forest service, and then buy some pie which we have for lunch.

We walk to Malcolm's house. First we go to the wrong place, because it turns out instead to be the home of the previous owner of his house. Finally we manage to find his place. Apart from Malcolm, we are greeted by Margaret, Alister and Rose.

I do some bush walks with Rose for about one and a half hours, then come back to the Stewart Island Travel. While waiting for Charlie I buy one T-shirt as a souvenir.

I have two paua shells from the beach of the three islands the names of which are Faith, Hope and Charity.

This island is rectangular in shape. It stretches approximately 40 miles from East to West, and as much from North to South. The area is nearly free

from both frost and snow, even in winter. This is because it is close to the sea. The population of the permanent residents here is approximately 500. It is full of native bushes, for example rata, mutton bird, rimu, ferns and flags. Some of the native birds are tui, bell bird and tomtit.

We leave the Stewart Island at around 4.30 pm. Then we go in a car to see the places where Charlie's PEP is currently working on. These works are, for instance, clearing the grass by the roadsides and filling in swampy areas. Then we pick Bruce up after he has finished his work at the TY Aluminium smelter, and return home.

Inverness has the population of around 50,000. There are several big factories, for example the Tiwai Aluminium smelter, the Alliance Freezing work, and another two freezing works. All of those mentioned give workers very high wages.

There are also other smaller industries. There is a factory area not far from the city. It sits on what was once swampy grounds, but which has now been filled up to make it higher, together with a good drainage system fitted in.

The plane linking the South Island with the Stewart Island that we took can accommodate 10 people including the pilot. It takes only 20 minutes to fly across whereas the ferry takes 2 hours.

The weather while we were on the Stewart Island was perfect. I could see that it had just stopped raining. Peaceful atmosphere reigned like that after a storm. When we boarded the plane in Invercargill, Charlie wore a raincoat similar to the one he had on when we walked the Milford Track.

All morning it was overcast and drizzling. But during the twenty minutes that we flew over to the island, the clear front coming from the south drives the rain clouds away to the north. Looking from through the windows from inside the plane, one could see the sky as being divided into two sections. We flew away from gales into a good weather. Charlie reads passages from the Bible on faith, hope and charity.

Raining again, and overcast and cold, though it is now Wednesday 11$^{\text{th}}$ January. I go to the Queens Park with Melinda in the morning, wearing a rain-jacket.

This park is over 260 acres in area. We walk here a while and then go to the Southland Museum in the building which also houses the Art Gallery. They sits to one corner of the Queens Park.

There are several types of bird in Queens Park. They were put in something that makes it resemble a zoo, like the way they do it in Ashburton but much bigger. The fountain here is very beautiful. From the Art Gallery we come back and have dinner.

Then Charlie comes back, and I go with him and Melinda to Gore because incidentally Charlie has some work to do there. He is interviewing 6–7 PEP

people this afternoon.

Along the way to Gore, on the hill to the right there is a monument of the last war among the Maoris, when the North Island Maoris came all the way down here to attack those in the South Island. That happened about 150 yeas ago. After that, they join force to fight against the *pakeha*s.

We do some shopping while Charlie interviewed people at the Labour Department. Around 4 pm we leave Gore.

We stop to look at Charlie's farm which he has let out for about nine months already. It has over 300 acres. There are no crops, only sheep and hay.

From Gore to Inverness a car coming from the opposite direction gives a headlamp signal to tell us that there is a cop's car watching the speed limit ahead of us.

Overcast today on Thursday 12$^{\text{th}}$ January. I leave Invercargill by bus at 8 am. I have to travel by bus because there are no tickets available on the Southerner. Charlie and Jeanette come to see me off at the station.

On the bus I sit with Helen from Methven, who used to be an AFS counsellor a few years ago. We stop for lunch at the railway station in Dunedin at noon. The bus picks us up again at 12.30 and we arrive in Ashburton at around 5 pm. Andy and dad pick me up at the station.

It rained in Dunedin, but started to clear up when we reached Canterbury. We could see the sun, but it was still cloudy.

Tonight I go to a potluck tea at Deborah's place. She is going to America next year as an AFS student. Now her family is hosting an AFS student who comes from the Kangaroo Island in the southern part of Australia, to the west of Tasmania.

I make two fire sticks. After tea Andrew, who is an AFS student in a short programme from Australia, shows his slides, then Kelly does hers and then I do mine. Then I show the fire dance.

It is quite windy and the flames flutter about in every direction, especially when you stop spinning the torches. I do it first with one hand, and then with two. Then we call it a day and each returns to his own home.

The next day is 13 January, and it is a Friday. At 8 am we go to a freezing work in Ashburton. I woke up just in time. There are Deborah's father, Andrew, two other boys, Andrea, Ritchie and me.

We look at the place where they herd sheep into a slaughter house which is called the stick pen. A pet lamb is used to lure the sheep away while a sheep dog drives them from this side.

We look at the main part, the storage room where meat is kept, the storage

house and freezer the temperature inside of which is $-14°C$, the crusher for bones and meat. The storage house is very spacious. Inside it forklifts are used to stack frozen sizes of mutton up. It must be like living in the Antarctic in here. Then we return.

Andy goes to see a doctor in town, and I sit in the car with Ritchie waiting. I get off the car to take one picture for him.

In the afternoon I go to Christchurch with dad, Andy and Ritchie. Andrea is moving her belongings to Christchurch.

Here we visit an aunt and an uncle at their home where we have tea and taste some of the wine he keeps. We look at the pictures she has painted, some of which have won prizes. We say goodbye to Grandma before we head for the bush.

There had been some hail here while we were in Christchurch. The weather has been overcast and cool all day today.

The next day is Saturday, and I wake up at around 8 am. At half past nine Brett's mother picks me up to go to their farm in Hinds. She comes together with her son.

The last stretch of road before we reach their farm is private, and it is lined with tall trees on both sides to shield the wind. The big tall trees that stand in lines along the border of the farm are also parts of the wind-breaks.

Then we have our morning tea, and then I show them some photographs from Daiï.

There are Ross, Brett, and their parents. Brett takes me outside and show me the silver and golden pheasant, trouts in the pool, Canadian goose, pet sheep and ducks.

When we come back we play chess together. We play two games and win one each. I win the first game, but it is actually Brett winning himself for he helped me several times.

We have our dinner after twelve, then we play a few games of snooker where I win Brett but Ross defeats me.

After that we have the afternoon tea, and then go together in a car to the south of Hinds, along the way that leads ultimately to Timaru.

We go across the Rangitata River, then turn left a little further on before coming to a hut at the mouth of the river.

We see some people fishing for salmon. The torrents are quite strong, the sea is rough, and it is windy. We meet one man who comes from Dunedin and stays at a holiday camp. He has been fishing when we talk to him.

We drive to the State Highway Number 1 again. On the way back, we stop once to have a look at a craft and souvenir shop, and then another time to

have some ice-cream.

At home we watch some of Ross's video-tapes from the Massey University, an open university similar to the Open University in the UK and the Ramgamhaeng University in Daiï. They are about Agriculture, Horticulture and Accounting.

Ross relates to me how in 1975 a strong northwesterly wind had blown down tonnes of trees. It hit the West Coast at approximately 30 miles per hour, went across the Southern Alps and sped up just north of Methven where it caused no damage. Once it reached Canterbury, however, its speed had increased to the devastating 100 miles per hour.

'This is the same aerodynamic principle that lifts up aeroplane's wings,' he says. If you take a cross-section of the South Island, you will find that it is as he said. Starting from the West Coast the land rises steeply up to the top of the Southern Alps. Then it falls with a more gradual slope towards the Canterbury Plain. The South Island of New Zealand is but a solitary aeroplane wing facing westwards.

In 1980 there was a big rain fall, 4 inches in one hour.

Again on the fourth of April 1982 there was a big hail storm with each ice pellet three-quarters of an inch across.

It is not difficult to imagine how it caused a lot of damage. With balls this size coming down from the sky, no windscreens can remain. Even the boot lid, bonnet and roof of a car must have been blown in. This was a southeasterly storm.

A wharf, with its breakwaters, can affect the appearance of the coastlines nearby. One example of this is the Timaru Wharf. It shades the waves in such a way that the Caroline Bay to the north of Timaru is being deposited by sand and shingles from the tide from the south, while the coast further up from it is being eroded by the tides at a very fast rate.

I am back in Ashburton at around half past nine, together with Brett's family. We stand talking in front of our house together with dad and mum. Then all of us come inside to talk with one another for another half an hour. After they have gone I take a shower, then bid everyone good night and go to bed.

I wake up early the following day, which is Sunday 15th January 1984. Hank and Carole are here for dinner. We sit talking together and look at some photographs. Then we come outside to take a group picture.

When they have left, I go with Andy, Nicki and Frana to Grandma's place only to find that she is not in. We think she must be in Christchurch.

Then we visit Nana, talk with her for a while, then say goodbye and come back.

My class 602 have a surprise party for me at our place. I open the door and find everyone in there. I thought that I have come to the wrong house, and was about to turn back when I suddenly recognise the faces. Most of us are here, including Mr Mathias, which makes it amazing how our small living-room could fit all of us in.

It is a farewell party because soon I will be leaving for Daiï. I hope that I have made the most of every opportunity that has come my way so far. The tramping trip with my class was cancelled, but I had been on the Milford Track which is an experience that could not have been better.

I have tried to study only those subjects that I could not have studied in Daiï, that is Sixth Form English, Music, Art History, Geology and Computer Studies. Computer is still a new thing, and at a school to boot. That was definitely unheard of.

After we have had tea, I come outside to prepare the fire sticks because Neal said he wanted to see the performance. It is nearly 10 pm when everybody sits either on the lawn or on the steps in front of our house while the two sticks with a torch at each end turn itself round and round over my head, under my feet, in front of me and behind me.

Everyone seems to like the show and is excited about it afterwards. I take a group picture of everybody.

Soon everyone says goodbye and leaves. I have found out that it is not a good idea to ask people to come outside to watch a show like this unless you have some other things waiting for them inside to prevent them from leaving early.

But there you go, no parties last forever, even our life if we consider it as a kind of party. Next week I shall have gone away to another world across the ocean.

We leave Auckland in the morning of 22 January 1984, flying Air New Zealand flight 05, arrive Sydney at noon, then depart Sydney one hour later on Singapore Airline SQ22 to arrive Singapore at 7.55 pm, and then travel from Singapore at 9.30 pm on SQ24 to find ourselves in Ḅaṇgkauk at 10.40 pm.

While in Ashburton, one of my friends at the *Śrị Ȧyudhyạ* sword school wrote to say that *Vậe*, who is our senior, had died. This came as a shock to me. His is amongst the most noble of hearts, and he loved us well.

Before I came to NZ, he gave me a most beautiful sabre that he had made himself, having taken the whole day to do so. I saw him spending ours working on it grimly and silently, without talking to anybody, which was by no means unusual of him. And when it was finished, he gave it to me and I was held in disbelief.

There is a favourite poem of his which he always told us. It is in Daiï, and

it goes like this.

Upsarrg saun gon hàị don od́.
Dȧurhod́ srạ̀ng gon con yìngyhă̱ị.
Mị mụe dāo yŭ kaḅ toa kloa arai.
Sù tă̱upai, mài vhăn mā̱e van tạï.

Which means in English,

Difficulty teaches man endurance.
Perseverance makes one great.
When you have both hands and feet with you, what do you fear?
Strive on and fear nothing, even the day that you die.

§

The time has passed relentlessly by, and it is already Sunday 14th February 1999 when I fly from Narita, Tokyo, to Cairn in Australia for a transit, and then to Auckland for a visit.

When I returned to Daiï towards the end of January 1984, we feel so fresh and confident. We had lived ten productive months, and in New Zealand of all places on earth if that is where it really was.

The AFS Daiï's staff whom we know, *Ḅí*, met us at the airport in Sydney, and she flew together with us to Ḅạngkauk.

In the airport in Singapore while waiting for our connecting flight, some of us walked around and look at things in the shops. Already the surrounding has changed so much within the last twenty-four hours since we took off from Auckland. There were more people around, but there was less trust and openness in their speeches.

I walked around a little, but was generally only talking with friends the whole while. Suddenly we heard two persons quarrelling with each other. It turned out to be *Ḅí* arguing with one of the shopkeepers I had a feeling that she was in trouble, so I gestured to *Òn* and the two of us went to her sides to escort her out of the shop.

I had guessed correctly, for if *Ḅí* was angry, then that other person was mad. The last thing we heard, or the only thing *I* heard, was the former saying to the latter, 'You ruin your country!' I never find out what had happened. Seldom do I question friends' troubles.

My father and mother met me in Ḅạngkauk. Stepping out from the Donmuang Airport, I feel shocked by the heat and the pollutions. We took a taxi to my father's favourite hotel in *Yaovrạj*, later dubbed the Chinatown.

I have some of the photographs printed here, and they came out very well. But the rest of them I did in Jiangmhăị and they look very miserable.

All our dogs in *Jiangmhăi* had died from rabies while I was in New Zealand.

My class-mate Philip comes to Daiï the following year to spend a year here as an AFS exchange student. He has not changed, but yet he seems not the same Philip I used to know when I meet him in this Southeast Asian setting.

Sometimes I feel like a complete fool when I am in Daiï, whereas when I am in other countries I can shine. Or was it the other way round?

My Sixth Form Certificate became for the first time in the history accepted in Daiï. And I also passed the country's qualifying exam the application of which my brother had meticulously and courageously secured for me while I was away.

He had been to every single meeting required of me, and had to sit among children ten years younger than him. Considering the fact that he was then already a father of a child, this was a remarkable feat indeed. I took University Entrance Exams and was accepted by the Faculty of Science at Jiangmhăị University (CMU). But I decided that I wanted to study another year with the rest of my class-mates at Montfort College. This has proved to be the only regret in my life, because I had always wanted to study Astronomy, and there goes my only chance.

The following year I was accepted again, this time to study at the Engineering Faculty, also at CMU. But I thought I wanted to do Medicine, so I went to Ḅaṇgkauk and took the second round of the UE exams there.

This was against the regulation because you were not supposed to take these exams again within the same year if you have already been offered a place to study that year, unless you have declined that offer first, which was not so in my case. So I was disqualified from both rounds, which includes the previous offer I already had.

After that, I came to live in Ḅaṇgkauk where I studied at the Rąmgaṃhąeng University (RU), which is an open university. There I studied Computer Science.

The following year I took again UE exams, and this time was offered a place to study Engineering at the Culą́longkaurṇ̀ University (CU). You must be crazy if you are a Daiï and decline an offer from such prestigious a university as this.

Still being scared by such a harsh measure on their children as the Daiï Government's disqualifying my previous two UE results, I asked the President of Rąmgaṃhąeng University, Sukhum, with whom I happened to have studied with in the subject of Political Science. Back then in 1986 he still had not become a politician.

I said to him that I did not want to study at CU for four years and then be disqualified from both universities. 'But,' I said, 'if I had to choose a hundred times between RU and CU, then I shall a hundred times choose to study at RU'. I had been pondering about this for a month.

'Because,' I continued, 'this was my first friend and a friend in need. I came here when I had nowhere else to turn to. Cuĺạ came second no matter how you look at it, and it shall have to wait or disappear if needs be'.

Disappointingly, my teacher Sukhum did not seem to be at all impressed by my loyalty to friends. He merely said, 'I can say nothing much about what CU would do if they find out that you also study here while studying with them. But what RU would do, that much I do know. And as far as I am concerned you will not be disqualified from here simply because you also study somewhere else at the same time. And if this is what we say, I am certain there shall be nobody who says otherwise'.

I went on to study at CU. It proved to be incredibly difficult at first, because I read too much and practised too little.

In undergraduate studies, especially in Engineering, you never read a lot of theory but solve the problems and play with these latter. The only thing that counts is that you always solve these problems in the same manner that you would in an opened-book exam.

This means that you search amongst your lecture notes, the various examples, the different theories, the many books at the library, *etc*, until you have solved the problem. You read the theories if you have to, but not before then.

With this very method you can also do research. In doing research you have before you problems. These you solve by all means available, even coin up new ones if you must.

This I had to discover the hard way. But only because I had come to this conclusion did I managed to finish both my Engineering degrees and my Computer Science degree.

I received a BEng in Mining Engineering in 1991, a BS in Computer Science in 1992, and then a BEng in Electrical Engineering in 1993.

From 1991 to 1993 I also worked as an engineer, and so I did the same for a great part of 1994.

I studied at University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology from 1994 to 1995 when I received an MSc. Then 1996–99 found me in a PhD course at the Tokyo Institute of Technology in Japan.

So when I come to New Zealand again in February 1999 I flew from Narita, and on my way back returned to the same.

During 1985–87 I sang tenor in the RU Chorus, *Vaḍhnạ* and *Mảhạthăi* Churches, and then for the Bangkok Music Society (BMS) and the Bangkok

Choral Society (BCS).

At the BMS we formed a small group and go everywhere together. We went to *Candrḅuri̱*, *Bnomrūng* Castle, *Phạtàem*, *Jiangmhăi̱*, Malaysia and Singapore.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) once said,

> ...to dance beyond yourself! What does it matter that you are failures!

And then,

> ...better to be foolish with happiness than foolish with misfortune, better to dance clumsily than to walk lamely. So learn from me my wisdom, even the worst thing has the good sides.

Similarly Martin Luther (1483–1546) says, '*Ich kann nicht anders, Gott helfe mir!*', while Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) in 1784 called us to arm with his '*Sapere aude!*' Shakespeare puts it more tragically.

> Come what come may,
> Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Every time that I feel sorry for myself for having forsaken my dream when I turned away from studying Science, and in particular Astronomy, I always think of these words spoken by Nietzsche through his Zarathustra, 'I forgive you what you did to me; but that you did it to *yourself*—how could I forgive that?'

In a similar manner he says, 'One should hold fast to one's heart; for if one lets it go, how soon one loses one's head, too!'

One should never be afraid to be different. 'Had I to carve an inscription on my tombstone I would ask for none other than "The Individual",' said Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), while Ralph Waldo Emerson says a similar thing, 'The individual is always mistaken'.

How many people we know are misunderstood monsters! And how many the opposite?

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) wrote *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) with the same idea as I mentioned. When his Ancient Mariner *shot the Albatross*, what he did was renouncing all the misconceptions and false interpretations of man, and instead put his fate solely in the hand of our Father.

The only reason he survived while all the others died was because he had put all his faith in God, and his life at the mercy of his Father.

'God save thee, ancyent Marinere!
'From the fiends that plague thee thus–
'Why look'st thou so?–with my cross bow
I shot the Albatross.

The *Albatross* here represents false hopes that work because of weaknesses of men. Its meaning is wider and more general than that of the Serpent and Satan in the Bible, because it means not only evils but all irrelevant things no matter how gentle and alluring.

So he shot the Albatross, and yet he could not find God, and he found that he could not pray no matter how hard he tried. He was a lost child; yet God saw that he had courage.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

Then he saw water-snakes and the love for other living things no matter how low enters his heart. That very moment God saw that he know Love, and He accepted his pray.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

Courage is a good thing. But courage alone is not enough, you need to have love, the love for all other creatures in all universes.

The moment that he finds love, he finds God. His place before this was not a limbo but a purgatory.

He had detached himself from all religions when he refused to believe in the Albatross. But he still could not reach Him because the weight of sin still hung heavily around his heck. Love changes all this, that love for all creatures great and small.

From 1984 until 1999 I have written letters to people I met in New Zealand, but these are by far too few, much less than I had promised to do. I am no good at keeping in touch with friends.

But through it all I have always been glad whenever I received a letter from Charlie. He believed in me when I no longer believed in myself.

The half-year's before and after we turned into this millennium I spent in Daiï jobless.

I translated from Japanese, English, and even once Portuguese into Daiï, and from Daiï into Japanese and English. I taught two courses, namely English for Master Degree and another course on Translation, at the *Pradíśṭh* Centre in *Ḅạngkauk*, after each of which courses I wrote two books whose translation from their Daiï titles into English † could be translated as *Interesting English* and *Free translation of English* in that order.

I performed for BMS and the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra the stick spinning, in which flags replaced the usual fire at both ends of each stick, *Polovtsian dances* ‡ by Alexander Borodin (1833–87).

I taught four other people to do some of the moves with one stick, so that they could help with the performance. There were also some professional dancers there, but I had nothing to do with them for mine is totally on a voluntary basis, and I received not a single penny for doing it. The sale of the tickets is said to proceed to AIDS projects.

O, I am a free Lạ̄nnạ! Do not forsake me!
I am a free Lạ̄nnạ, and professions escape me.
O, I am a Lạ̄nnạ without a profession.
A Lạ̄nnạ with no professions.

Then I went to Paris for a month and started my study on Mathematical Modelling of Economics. I studied at the Department of Mathematics at the Université Paris 1, Panthéon–Sorbonne. It is a DEA master degree course which may subsequently lead to a PhD one.

I have been told more than once by different persons to give up doing a PhD, to get a job and lead a *decent* life.

'But is everyone not doing just that nowadays?', I thought.

I was already even back then writing, and I knew then as I know now that it is no more the PhD I want, than the process of doing it.

To be yourself is to be misunderstood.

† Respectively, '*Bhạṣạ Angkṛiṣ an nà soncaị*' and '*Plạe kleḱ Ankṛiṣ*'.

‡ In his opera *Prince Igor* (1890).

What do we wait for, really, when we have dreams? We shall never be this young again.

People borrow too much from other people. Some say that if you do it nobly then it is all right. But even these, to me, are still borrowings all the same.

It is worse if you do it for some earthly benefits, less so if for Arts. Some do it like a game, keeping counts of those ideas and things they have covertly appropriated, like a womaniser does the counts of virgins they have slept with.

As Shakespeare has put it in his *Love's Labour's Lost*,

> 'There is no such sport as sport by sport o'ertrown,
> To make theirs ours and ours none but our own:

A 17^{th}-century English playwright whose name is John Dennis once said thus, 'That's my thunder, by God! The villains will not play my play, but they steal my thunder!', when a new stage technique he had devised up was used in other people's play while the play he had written was binned.

Originalities in idea almost always trigger a conflict. And the magic thing about a fray is that whoever watches it long enough will soon join in. Some refute other people's thought simply because they regret not having said it themselves.

Again Shakespeare must have known all about this when he wrote for his *Love's Labour's Lost*,

> The effect of my intent is to cross theirs:
> They do it but in mocking merriments.
> And mock for mock is only my intent.

Good friends often are different from each other. This rule of thumb is not necessarily restricted to people. Thus Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874–1965) said in his speech on 30^{th} December 1941, 'We shall never descend to the German and Japanese level', while Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945) on the other hand dropped the bombs on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The UK and the US seem to be two inseparable bosom friends.

We see a similar thing happened again when Tony Anthony Charles Lynton Blair (b. 1953) in 2002 preached educational programmes for the new, post-Taliban Afghanistan, while George W. Bush bombed the country's civilians.

Myself, I have no opinions because I do not personally know any of them, and it was not me who voted for them.

However, I think it is interesting to note that, at least in the case with the US, you sometimes have these namesakes who seem the worse side of their

counterparts. George Herbert Walker Bush (b. 1924) ended the Cold War between the West and the Eastern Europe in 1989, and Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906.

The trouble with federal democracy is that the president of the states is too powerful—he has, in the case of the US for instance, the power to decide the fate of all the twenty member nations of the Federation—that he makes his nations seem like someone who is suffering from the multi-personalities syndrome.

I like Airports, they are my second home. For one thing, the temperature in them is always just right, no matter where you are. Then there are those spacious disabled toilets where you can easily and sufficiently clean yourself without much trouble. And there are many different places safe enough for you to sleep, as long as you do not seem homeless.

The same is true with the Cairn Airport, even though it is small. The disabled toilet here is as clean and inviting, the surrounding as refreshing as any other good airports elsewhere.

As a city, Auckland is unique. It has one third the population of the country, one tenth that of London and sprawls over a larger area than the Greater London.

As such it is the only metropolis in New Zealand. But it has no high-rise buildings.

The area around Auckland, that is the sea, the harbour, the gulf and the islands are also strangely charming. On some of the islands it can be very secluded even though only hours from the city by boat. As late as 1983 when I was at Ashburton College, at the earliest, there are on some of these islands schools to where students do not wear shoes.

During the Industrial Revolution the Kiwis on this side of the globe suffered. T. H. Potts who discovered the great spotted kiwi met a hunter in 1871 who claimed that he had killed over two thousands kiwis. At around the same time kiwi skins were being thrown in sacks into the Thames because there were more of them than market demand.

The kiwi was known to the Maoris as the hidden bird of Tane, the forest god who is greatly feared. A female kiwi is bigger and heavier than a male. Hers are the duties of laying eggs and protecting the nest from predators, his that of incubating the eggs.

The egg weighs one fifth of the normal weight of the female, and a full quarter of her weight after having laid it. In other words, a kiwi lose a fifth of her original, normal weight when she lays an egg.

The egg takes approximately seventy-five days to hatch. She normally lays her eggs starting from August, which is late winter, one after another with an interval of about 22 days in between, to up to three eggs. She keeps her

male busy incubating and nursemaiding if she lays her eggs as many as three.

If it ever comes to fighting, you do not want to fight with a kiwi. A kiwi, especially a female one, fights fiercely by holding its opponent fast with its beaks while attacking the same with its claws, which are powerful. If her opponent refuse to retreat she would do it time and again until she dies.

This is one of the reasons why Kiwi has replaced Silver Fern as the national symbol of New Zealand. Both Maoris and Pakehas alike identify themselves with this bird. You may say that it is the one thing that unites the people of both races together.

All scientific names of kiwis start with *Apteryx*, that is 'wingless'. But as all other birds, a kiwi used to have wings once when it used to fly about.

There are now five species of kiwis, three of which are brown and the rest two grey. It seems a rule of thumb that the three brown kiwis increase in their body size the further south they live. They are namely the North Island kiwi, *Apteryx australis mantelli*, the South Island kiwi, *Apteryx australis australis*, and the Stewart Island kiwi, *Apteryx australis lawryi*.

Both of the two grey kiwi species live in the South Island. They are the great spotted kiwi, *Apteryx haasti*, also known as roa, and the little spotted kiwi, *Apteryx oweni*, which has a home now in the bird sanctuary on Kapiti Island just off the coast of Paraparaumu, a seaside settlement north of Wellington where sunsets silhouette the South Island in the distance and the Kapiti Island in the foreground.

I board the Qantas Airways Flight QF0060 from Narita at 10.30 am on 14 February to come to Cairns, and from here on the same day QF0013 at 10.30 pm bound for Auckland.

Arriving in Auckland I sit at the airport and wait until it is light before I get on a bus to come to town.

In Auckland I walk around with the rucksack on my back. Walking past the Aotea Centre I see the sign advertising that *Les Misérables* is on here from January until March 1999.

Auckland is like no other places in New Zealand, if this is the New Zealand I used to know. There is a potluck mixture of different things. On the streets a sign says 'Japanese Sake', further on there is another which says, 'Mississippi. Pool, bar', soon there appears another, 'London Bar. Bistro'. Others you know at a first glance that they are either a sex shop or a house of some dubious shows.

This city is more of a sound than a bay. It borders on the sea where there are numerous islands the more populated ones of which are connected to each other by bridges, while for the other or the more distant ones you need to take the ferry.

I do not check in at the Youth Hostel but take a bus, or rather a coach, to Turangi at night.

In New Zealand you use the words *bus* and *coach* exchangeably. But not so in the UK where the latter is used for big public vehicles for long haul journeys, whereas the former is used to describe the public local omnibuses.

Monday 15th February 1999, at 7.50 pm travelling by the Intercity Coachlines I go from the Sky City Coach Terminal in Auckland to Turangi. The coach ticket costs NZ $46.

The building where the coach terminal is situated has a tall tower above it that looks impressively like those you expect to find in a scientific fiction. It acts as an antenna for some broadcastings, and also I think one could go up there for a fee to have a bird's eye view of the city and the sea.

Arriving here at 1.44 am (according to what is written in my ticket anyway) I walk to the YHA but have to wait until it opens in the morning.

Some of the banks you find in downtown Auckland are ABS, Bank of Hong Kong, Bank of NZ and Countrywide Bank. Among these, I found that the Countrywide Bank gives the best exchange rate for traveller's cheque.

The best exchange rate of all can be found not at a bank but at Thomas Cook. There is a small catch, however, because it charge $5 for commission.

At 7.30 am I buy a tour for $20 to go to the Tongariro National Park (NP). They will drop us at one place, then we have to walk through the national park to be picked up in the afternoon from another. Since I have not checked in at the YHA, I cannot leave my backpack there. So I go with that and my camera case.

There are more than ten people who come with us in the minibus. When we start walking there are other people also who has come by some other means. Some are school students or Boy Scouts.

By and by I lag behind other people because of my rucksack and also because I take many photographs. This is a very educating walk, as I will find out before long. It leads you through the natural process of destruction and recreation.

You start off walking along what seems to be a normal nature walk. There are trees and plants along both sides of the path, and behind these mountains. Soon the density of the trees starts to diminish until it altogether vanishes. Here is the area of active volcanic activities.

The area of this national park is officially said to be 78,651 hectares, but according to some other sources more than 80,000. There are three active volcanoes, namely Mt Tongariro, Mt Ruapehu and Mt Ngauruhoe.

This is a World Heritage (WH) Area, and the only one in the North Island as such. In the South Island there is also only one World Heritage Area, that

is the Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area. But it includes four different national parks and is much larger than the Tongariro NP.

The Tongariro NP, however, is unique with its dual WH status due to both its natural and cultural values.

The path leads me up the mountain, at the top of which you can see three beautiful lakes below.

The shade of the green colour of the water in the lakes is so strangely beautiful, they look like some huge precious stones. The water along the edges of the lakes are dark and light shades of brown alternately as the surrounding earth and debris diffuse towards their centre.

As a rule, I normally enjoy climbing a mountain more than descending it, since the force experienced by the former changes more gradually whereas in the latter case this force comes as impulses.

But here is one example of an exception to this rule. The path which leads down the slope is steep and is the same path followed by the debris, so I assume this is the quickest descent.

It is extremely difficult to *walk* down the path because the face of the slope is so steep and the ground so loose. For similar reasons, it is also impossible to *climb* down.

But it is easy and fun to *slide* downwards the way one plays the ski, that is to say, throwing your weight alternately on the left and the right foot, forming behind you a sinusoidal track. This way I manage to catch up with, and even overtake, several people in front of me.

This descend is so steep that when I stop mid way down the slope, standing with my feet sidewise, the way you would stand on the slope of a snow field, the knee of my upper leg is way above that of my lower one, and the ground on the same level with my shoulder seems so close I could have touched it at an elbow's length. No one can descend this slope without getting his hands dirty.

At this point the ground is all barren, totally devoid of life.

The path leads next along the crests of the hills. Below there are valleys the floor of which is so level, with some odd rocks here and there, which makes them look a mixture between the seas on the moon and the surface of Mars.

Yet on the floor of some of these valleys is what looks like a dark fluffy carpet, which I think is either porous pumice or some similar rocks which was once that part of lava bubbles on the surface which cooled first. No need to say, these are barren ground too.

But up here on the hills I begin to see the first signs of life. Soon there are tufts of grass here and there. These increase in number, smoothly but at a sure pace, and before you have time to say 'Bravo' you find yourself standing

on a grass-covered plateau.

I think that I not so much lag behind the others as loiter. I take a detour to visit a hut where people tramping can stay.

The hut commands a magnificent view of the mountains, and I stay here as long as I dare to. This means that I have to quicken my steps after this, and in the end have to run.

'Good, I just make it in time,' I congratulate myself upon reaching the car park. But the first greeting I receive from the tour's staff surprises me.

'Excellent, you are here. We were thinking about leaving you behind. We are all waiting for you. Two ladies have a bus to catch, otherwise they miss their plane'.

In disbelief I ask, 'But I thought I was on time,' I say, then add, 'What time is it now?' She tells me the time. Some how I have been deceived by my watch, I never find out since when.

Climbing up the bus I try to make myself as small as possible, and quickly disappear into a seat. I must have been at least fifteen minutes late.

'Sorry,' I meekly muttered though no one has yet blamed me for being late, 'it was my watch'.

There is no need for me to sleep here at the YHA because my coach leaves in the morning at 1.45 am.

Turangi is a small, peaceful town. I find a place that sells fish and chips, buy myself a packet of these and bring it back to the kitchen at the YHA to eat. There is nothing much to do, so I relax and while away the time until my coach arrives.

Both the Ngati Tuwharetoa and Upper Whanganui tribes have ancestral rights to what we call the Tongariro National Park now. The former has a claim to the largest area of the park which dates back to explorations made by Ngatoro-i-rangi, high priest from the Te Arawa canoe.

According to the Maori legend the volcanic fires around here are kindled when he was in danger of freezing to death on the mountains. His prayers were answered by the fire demons of Hawaiki, who sent fire through White Island and Rotorua to burst out from the top of the mountains.

To appease the gods, Ngatoro-i-rangi cast the female slave Ngauruhoe into the volcano which the local Maori later called Ngauruhoe by the poor girl's name.

All the three peaks named became sacred to Tuwharetoa. The Tuwharetoa chief Horonuku Te Heu Heu Tukino IV became concerned for the future of these lands belonging to him as the sale of land increased.

In 1887 he showed a great foresight and generosity by giving it to the Crown.

His original gift comprised the 2,640 hectares which form the nucleus of the present national park. The 7,517 ft high Ngauruhoe is typically cone-shaped, and is the most active amongst the three mountains. It erupts smoke and ash occasionally. In 1954–5 an eruption intermittently lasted for nine months.

The Ruapehu, literally the 'exploding hole', is 9,175 feet high and perpetually capped with snow. It is a multiple volcano the flattened summit of which stretches 1.8 miles and incorporates an acidic, bubbling Crater Lake as well as six small glaciers.

Now and then it would blow, and in 1945 it did again, raining dust over 56 miles in radius.

On Christmas Eve in 1953 a lahar discharged from it pushed boulders and sand before it and hit a railway bridge at Tangiwai 23 miles away. Minutes later, a Wellington-Auckland express train plunged down into the river below and 151 people died.

Mount Ruapehu is the major ski area of the North Island. Its Chateau Tongariro-Whakapapa ski field is the oldest ski field in New Zealand.

At 6,400 feet the Tongariro is the lowest one among the three mountains. It contains a series of small craters as well as the Ketetahi hot springs.

We arrive in Wellington at 6.50 am on the same day. The coach fare from Turangi to Wellington is the same as that from Auckland to Turangi.

There is nothing much I can do in Wellington at this hour, since the ferry leaves at 9.30 in the morning. The Aotea Quay where it takes off is from where the coach stops just about in the opposite direction of the city.

The coach terminals and the railway station are within an easy reach of one another. Passengers who are travelling by ferry are given a lift in minibuses to the ferry terminal free of charge.

The minibus goes along Waterloo Quay and Aotea Quay. Then it turns left, circles to the right and passes under a motorway and then under itself until it has nearly made a full circle when you are finally at the Interislander Ferry Terminal.

On the back of the ticket there are maps showing the various ways you can get to the ferry terminal, which is very useful for those who bring a car because if you miss that first left-turn, then you are in a big trouble.

The ferry ticket costs $39. The next bus leaves Picton at 1.15 pm, and is supposed to bring us to Kaikoura by 3.30 before it goes on further to Christchurch.

The driver stops along the way in order that we may take pictures of the seals, and so we are 30 minutes later than scheduled. However, he did duly ask all the passengers first whether anyone would have minded being a little late.

This road follows a magnificent coastline with which I fell in love back in 1983–4.

At Kaikoura I check myself in at the Youth Hostel, and buy a ticket to go whale-watching tomorrow morning. Then I walk to the South Bay, which is along the road towards Christchurch, on the other side of the Kaikoura Peninsula. The Youth Hostel is on the Esplanade and its manager is Kuini.

Thursday 18th February, the whale-watching is not as spectacular as it may sound. Most parts of the whale are underwater, but the small part it shows is already huge, especially if it comes near the boat.

We see the Giant Sperm Whale, which grows up to 20 metres long. Or rather we see their back and flukes, when these latter flip up just before they dive down.

Amazingly 'Whale Watch' is a trademark here, of a company. Between today and 24th February are Andy and John's wedding, and family times in Christchurch, Ashburton and Methven.

I would rather not go into details lest it bores you. Moreover it is a little too personal and I do not yet know you well.

I remember that I could find neither the bride nor bridegroom, so I asked a policeman at the police station in Cathedral Square. And amazingly they knew!

The wedding was on Friday. That evening there was a reception at a hotel, after which we stayed at a motel. I remember this well because Tara fell out of bed. And since hers was on the upper berth, *that* was serious.

The barbecue party at Nicki's place on Saturday was special, the swimming on Sunday was memorable, and the visit to the fire station in Methven where Ritchie volunteers in a fire brigade was touching. Oh yes, we also visited Grandma and I played the piano at home.

'Tara' is Irish Gaelic. It means 'rocky hill'. 'Mallory' comes from the Old French, *malheureux*, and means 'unhappy' or 'unlucky'. 'Alastair' is the Gaelic variation of *Alexander*, which is Greek and means 'man's defender'. The Scottish version of this name is 'Allister'. 'Charles' is Old German for 'man'. Historically a *churl* is an Anglo-Saxon peasant. 'Charlie' is a nickname of 'Charles'. 'Albert' is Old English for 'high born' or 'brilliant'. 'Ben' is Hebrew for 'son'. It is usually a shortened form of other names, for instance Benedict, Benjamin, or Benson. 'Benjamin' in particular means 'son of the right hand'. 'Zoë' is Greek for 'life'.

Wednesday 24th January, dad and mum take me to Christchurch. Then I take a Lazerline coach to Nelson, the ticket of which costs $40. This must be the first time I pass the Lewis Pass. If Arthur's Pass is a mountain, then Lewis Pass is a hill. Apart from these two, one other pass links Canterbury with the Westland, that is Burke's Pass which is merely a pass, neither a

mountain nor a hill.

The Lewis Pass was opened in 1939. In 1864 Arthur Dudley Dobson rediscovered the old Maori route that is now named after him. Lewis Pass is 2,838 feet high, Arthur's Pass 3,032 feet. One simply does not talk about the height of Burke's Pass.

By the Rose Express bus I go from Nelson to Picton. The ticket costs $17. I stay in Picton tonight.

At the New World Supermarket in Nelson, a packet of crisps costs $1.69 and a can of Coca Cola $1.39. Two supermarkets that you see everywhere here are New World and Woolworth.

Catch the ferry Arahura, the 'pathway to dawn', in the morning at 5.30, Thursday 25th February, to Wellington. For ferries this early you pay the Super Saver Fare, which is two thirds of the full price. The fleet can carry up to 126 vehicles and up to 997 passengers. Another one of the Interislander ferries, the newer Aratere or the 'quick path', can carry up to 150 vehicles and up to 350 passengers.

Mayor Michael Fowler was responsible for the replacements of some beautiful Victorian buildings with many of the present tall, glass-clad buildings, from about the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. The Beehive was built during this period. Some says that because of earthquakes, glasses are better than bricks. But others reckon otherwise.

The Old St Paul's Church was built in 1866, the Government Buildings in 1876, the General Assembly Library in 1897 in Gothic style, and the Parliament Buildings in 1922. The Alexander Turnbull Library boasts a remarkable collection of NZ and Pacific history.

The great quakes of 1848 and 1855 raised the land by 5 feet. After these, people realised that it was safer to build in wood, and therefore when the Government Buildings on Lambton Quay were built, they were made entirely of native wood.

I visit the new Te Papa Our Place, aka the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, on the southern bank of the Wellington Harbour which is also known as the Port Nicholson. It has a lovable exhibition of NZ's national heritage.

Sandwiched between Victoria St, Wakefield St and Jervois Quay are the Library, Art Gallery, WCC Offices which I think is a World Cultural Centre, and the Town Hall.

Surrounded by these is the paved space which turns into a footbridge that crosses in style the Jervois Quay towards an enclosed dock the opposite side of which is the Rowing Club. On top of this footbridge is a spacious planked floor, equipped with seats and some artistic objects.

A little further north from this is another footbridge which crosses the same street. In the middle of the courtyard and high above the ground is suspended a globular shell of metallic fern leaves loosely joined together, which leave plenty of holes which allow one to see through it.

A cable car goes from The Terrace on Lambton Street up to the Wellington Botanic Gardens on the hill. I take the cable car up, walk to the Carter Observatory, to the Lady Norwood Rose Garden and the surrounding area, and then come down on foot.

Wellington is a hilly city. To the north one sees houses lining the face of the hills.

The rose bushes number 107 on the brochure, with 14 more miniature roses. Examples of the roses are Aotearoa New Zealand, Big Purple, Chanelle, Duet, Etoile de Hollande, First Love, Golden Delight, Hot Chocolate, Ice White, Jadis, Kiskadee, Love Story, Madame President, National Trust, Old Master, Pristine, Queen Elizabeth, Remember Me, Summer Dream, Tzigane, Europeana, Vienna Wood, Western Sun, Sexy Rexy, Youki San and Zonta Rose.

All the rose bushes are lined in concentric circles, which are fitted inside a square-shaped ground the corners of which are the trial beds and the miniature roses. Four paths divide them into four quadrants, with a small fountain sprinkling in the middle.

The 14 miniature roses are namely Angela Rippon, Coral Island, Dainty Dinah, Firefly, Holy Toledo, Kaikoura, KO's Yellow, Little Prince, Patio Flame, Patio Jewel, Red Ace, Rise 'n' Shine, Soroptimist International and Sunblaze.

The flowering season lasts from the beginning of November until the end of April.

Dead-heading is the act whereby you remove all the spent flower heads to allow for new flowers.

Pruning starts in May, with climbers and then the bush roses. This done, the beds are weeded, the roses sprayed, and the beds covered with bark mulch.

Spraying is done from Labour Weekend until Easter. I guess that this is the last weekend of October, and Labour Day the Monday before this. The roses are fed in September, December and February.

This LN Rose Garden was opened in 1953. Lady Norwood is the wife of Sir Charles Norwood, a former mayor of Wellington. Both had done great services to the city. Old roses dating to Regency and Victorian times are being displayed in the Bolton Street Memorial Park, five minutes northeast from here on foot.

The coach I take from here to Auckland leaves at 7.50 pm. I have a few hours to spare, so I walk along the water of the harbour. Then I walk to the

railway station, follow the Mulgrave Street to a supermarket, and then along the Molesworth Street to the railway station.

On this latter street and close to Sydney St East I buy some fish and chips. At the railway station the InterCity coach leaves from Platform 9.

The New World Supermarket was sandwiched between the Murphy St and the Molesworth St. There is a Food Mall on Manners St and Cuba St. It has been a good day.

I arrive in Auckland at 6.50 the following morning, Friday 26$^{\text{th}}$ February, then take the 8.30 coach to Bryderwyn, arrive there at 10.10 am, and then change into a Pioneer bus which leaves Brynderwyn at 10.20 to be in Paihia at 4.15 pm. This is a small bus where all the seats are covered with woolen sheep skin. We do not go to Paihia in the shortest line but take a round trip through the Northland Conservation Park.

The bus stops along the way and we all walk into the forest to have a look at the biggest tree in New Zealand, a giant kauri called 'Tane Mahuta', *Tane* being the god of the forests. Others say that the name of this tree is actually *Te Matua Ngahere*.

Kauri, *Agathis australis*, is a conifer found only in New Zealand. Its timber is said to be the world's best for boat-building. They were felled at a relentless rate during 1870–1910, and as a result all the millable forests were all exhausted by 1920. The biggest kauri has the girth that is exceeded in the world only by the giant sequoia trees in California.

According to Maori legend, the birth of all life occurred in Te Po, the stillness of a long dark night. The primordial parents are the sky father Rangi and the earth mother Papa.

Tane their eldest son pulled himself free from them in the darkness and slowly pushed them apart. He decorated Rangi with the sun, the moon and the stars, and Papa with plant and animal life. Rangi's tear fills her surface with oceans and lakes.

We watch the video about Opo the friendly dolphin. In Paihia I walk to the look-out point at Waitangi, which must be about two miles away. The road you walk on runs along the coast. To your right is the Veronica Channel. Then you reach the bridge which crosses over an inlet to a forest. A part of this forest is the Waitangi National Reserve.

There is here at Waitangi the Treaty House. Across the water from here is Russel, the first capital of New Zealand. Three more miles across the water further on from Russell is the Motuarohia Island where Captain Cook anchored in 1789. Russell used to be called Kororareka. It is already dark when I walk back to Paihia.

The Waitangi Treaty House is single storey, and looks like a summer house with windows that may as well be doors since they reach right down to the

floor, and a long veranda. Today the House is a national museum, an endowment to the nation from Lord Bledisloe who had only one condition, that is that it be fully restored.

The document that was signed here in 1840 by Maori chiefs, English gentlemen, and Governor William Hobson on behalf of Queen Victoria, guarantees the Maori land rights, gives both them and the Pakeha the Crown protection, and admit New Zealand to the British Empire.

Back in Paihia, it was here that in 1834 arrived William Colenso who set up a printing press. A mission station was set up here in 1823. The first ship in the country, the Herald, was built here from where it was launched in 1826. The fractal features of inlets, bays, channels and passages along the coasts here are parts of the Bay of Islands.

Christians are the strangest people on earth, despite the fact that they share many believes with people of other religions. The Old Testament is essentially the same for Jews, Muslims and Christians alike.

The New Testament makes all the difference. Whereas in the Old Testament the theme is Fear, believers are called god-fearing people, the theme of the New Testament is Love, for Jesus preaches the love of our neighbours and enemies.

Therefore Christianity is unique in that it contains two contrasting themes. God is beyond reasonings, and Jesus died on the Cross for us.

There is more to dying for other people than meets the eyes. Everyone is dying for someone somewhere all the time. The Kamikaze pilots, the suicide bombers, soldiers, or even mobs fighting for democracy and freedom.

But what Christ did was not simply to die for others but to forgive sins, of all things the Sins against God; 'For they know not what they are doing'.

In one room at Auschwitz where there are on display a little-ease and piles of shoes, spectacles and, I think, combs, there is a line saying, 'Those who had done all this did not realise that we have to live with it all our lives'.

They have no rights to drive this harsh conscience into their own offsprings.

Buddhism, on the other hand, is no religion. To be a religion one must start from myths, which comes only with faith. The faith is then developed into a philosophy over time.

Philosophies no longer have things to do with faith. One simply does not have faith in a philosophy, even when one believes it is correct. Believing what is right and what is wrong is the basis of all actions. Therefore all sciences are based on philosophies.

Buddhism is essentially a religion of disbeliefs, for Buddha has told us never to believe in something simply because people have told us, or because it is in some books thus written, or indeed because it is the result of our own

reasoning or conviction.

All men are fallible. Therefore there are experts, but no authorities. Strong feelings of conviction make dogmatists of us. Certainty is rarely objective whereas truth is, because it is correspondence to the facts. But Truth is so evasive and difficult to find. It is often impossible to separate believes from it. What is worse is that the way we see facts depends on our upbringing and education, both of which are never objective. As for certainty, it is usually no more than a strong feeling of trust and conviction based on insufficient knowledge.

All kinds of knowledge are adaptations to environmental and to internal regularities, to long-term situations and to short-term ones.

If you are a Christian and ever doubt that there is an omnipotent Being that created everything, heeds one's prayer, and can exist in the mind, then I suggest you try praying for other people sometimes.

It does not matter to whom your prayer is for, it could be one of your friends, relatives, or enemies, so long as it is not for yourself you are praying. Then you would perhaps find out for yourself something that I have found for mine.

Nietzsche once said through his Zarathustra, 'You want to be paid as well, you virtuous! Do you want reward for virtue and heaven for earth and eternity for your today?'

According to him also, every work of our virtue is like a star extinguished. Its light is for ever travelling.

But prayers does not exist in Buddhism. A Buddhist may recite Buddha's purely philosophical teaching but should never pray.

I pray to God for all Buddhists that they may find the true core of Buddha's teaching, which I think is wholly philosophical, and which Buddha says that one must find for one's self.

Unwanted animals around here are Feral Goats, Hares, Magpies, Mynas, Possum and Rabbits, because they damage trees. The Feral Goats, *Capra hircus*, came here with Captain Cook. They eat shoots of tree, thus prevent regeneration.

The Hares, *Lepus europaeus occidentalis* or European brown hare, were introduced in 1851. They eat tree barks and young shoots.

The Mynas, *Acridotheres tristis*, were introduced into NZ in 1870s. They are aggressive birds, and are therefore undesirable in the point of view of native birds.

Magpies, *Gymnorhina tibicen*, were introduced in the 1860s from Australia. They eat insects, seeds, and rob birds' nest.

Rabbits, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, were brought here by Captain Cook. They damage both trees and vegetables. Their digging can also cause erosion.

These unwanted animals mentioned are eliminated by shooting, poisoning, trapping, fumigation, or repellents put on trees.

I stay at the Youth Hostel here tonight. The next day, Saturday 27th February 1999, I leave Paihia at 8 am to go to Auckland. The coach leaves from the Maritime Building.

In Auckland, I buy myself a ferry ticket to go to the Waiheke Island. The ferry goes all the way to the mouth of the Waitemata Harbour, then finding itself in a more open water it cruises towards its destination. The trip is longer than I thought because the island lies farther away than I expected. It is half-way to the Coromandel Peninsula, so you could well imagine how far.

From the pier I take a local bus to a bay where the YHA is. This is so completely different from Auckland, or from all the parts of NZ I have seen for that matter. It feels like some southeast Asian island. It would not have surprised me if school students go to school bare-footed.

You have to walk uphill to the Youth Hostel. There is a road, but it goes in a zig-zag manner, so I climb up along the steep footpath.

The Youth Hostel in Waiheke Island commands an excellent view from the top of the hill where it sits. It borders the Seaview Reserve, where below is the Onetangi Bay with its white sandy beach reachable via the access way.

I could have spent my time here all the afternoon, and I feel like doing just that too because it is hot outside with the sun shining and I am tired.

'But what is the point of coming all the way here, the ferry, buses and all, if you would have it your way and just sit and relax,' I muse. So I go outside, climb the steps down to the beach and swim in the sea in the bay. I swim out with the back-stroke for about 30 metres, come in with the butterfly, and keep repeating this until I want to stop. This way I can always keep my eyes on the things I have left on the shore. Even though this time there is next to nothing there apart from my shoes, I do it like this all the same because I prefer to keep my eyes on the land. It makes me feel safer.

After fifteen minutes of swimming I am so refreshed that I feel like walking around the island.

Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) may have been right when he said, '*Tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos, dans une chambre*'.

But I think that here he merely intends to be witty, even though this wittiness of his is philosophical in a way because what he says is true.

The thing is, we should never fear death more than an unlived life.

I start my long walk across the island along the Seaview Road until I reach the Onetangi Road, then find my way to the Onetangi Reserve for forest and birds. This is a private reserve open to the public.

On the Onetangi Road I buy some fish and chips, then sit down to eat them on a nearby playground, opposite to a school yard. The Onetangi Reserve is a native forest with indigenous trees like the kauri, matai, miro, nikau palms, pohutukawa, rimu and taraire.

On top of the hill is a large platform commanding grand views. I spend my time inside the reserve until it is dark. At dusk, the view of the bay and the island from up here is magnificent.

It is already dark by the time I could get out of the park, so I keep myself to the roads and stop now and then to read my map under one of the few street lamps.

The next day I leave the island in the morning on a ferry back to Auckland. Then I go to the airport to meet my parents and sisters who come to join me from Daiï.

A brochure issued by the Auckland City mentions eight groups of walkways. These walkways are graded in increasing difficulty levels as Path, Walking Track, Tramping Track and Route. For the Path you may bring your wheelchairs and push-chairs, but for the Route you would need heavy footwear and boots.

The Matiatia–Owhanake–Fossil Bay Walkways pass through DOC's Matietie Historic Reserve where, at the northern headland of the Matiatia Bay, there are terraces of an ancient headland pa and you have to treat the area with respect.

The Church Bay Walkways pass through the Atawhai Whenua Reserve. Church Bay has been the site of the first church and mission on Waiheke since 1833.

The other walkways are Oneroa–Newton Reserve–Blackpool, Hekerua–McKenzie Reserve–Palm Beach, Onetangi, Rocky (Omiha) Bay Reserves, Orapiu–Otakawhe–Pearl Bays, and Waikopou Bay.

I have spent some time planning out our trip, the results of which is the following. First we go to Waitomo on 28 Feb. to see the grow-worm caves, 204 km; then to Picton, 1 March, that is 443 km plus the ferry; 2 March to Ashburton, 486 km; 3 March to Invercargill, 577 km; 4 March to the Milford Sound and Te Anau, 400 km; 5 March to Hokitika, 723 km; 6 March Wellington, 401 km plus the ferry; 7 March to Taupo, 464 km; 8 March to Thames, 463 km because we will probably make a round trip of the Coromandel Peninsula also; 9 March to Auckland Airport, 115 km; and 10 March everybody except me leaves for Daiï.

It turns out that we follow this plan to details, which greatly amazes me.

We leave Auckland on Sunday 28^{th} February 1999 by a rented car, Nhan being the driver and I the co-pilot. The next day we visit the Waitomo Caves.

The cave here was first explored in 1887 by Tane Tinorau a Maori Chief and Fred Mace an English surveyor. By 1888 it is opened to tourists by the former. From 1906 it belonged to the government who returned it in 1989 to the descendants of the original owners.

Not far from the Waitomo Cave is another cave, the Aranui Cave, where people come to see stalactites.

Glow worms are larvae of the small fungus-gnat, *Arachnocampa luminosa*. They build their nest of mucus and silk in the shape of hollow tubes hung down from the ceiling of the cave or under tree branches. From below these tubes hung threads coated with sticky mucus by which they trap insects.

Their life cycle consists of three weeks as eggs, eight months as larvae, then pupae, and finally adult. The adult flies only live a few days because they cannot eat. The larval stage is the only time the insect can eat and is also the period during which it emits light.

Caves are formed gradually as cracks inside limestone. The latter was formed 30 million years ago under the sea.

From the caves we go to Lake Taupo. Beside the lake enormous trees have been cut, leaving stumps one of which we now use as a table for our lunch.

To the north of the lake is an area called Wairakei where the Huka Falls is. People come here to jet-boat.

The Huka Falls are on Waikato River on which there are quite a few dams, for example the Ohakuri, Atiamuri, Whakamaru, Maraetai and Waipapa hydroelectric dams. The area is rich with thermal activities.

We visit Orakei Korako to see the boiling mud. The river flows out from the lake in the northeast direction and then makes a turn and flows westwards. This makes most of the dams come with a lake to their eastern flank. All these lakes have names of the corresponding dams.

We stay at Rotorua to the north of Lake Taupo and at night watch Maori dances at a place called Magic of the Maori near St Faiths Church not far from the lake front. It is performed inside a marae, which is a hall made of timber and used for meetings. I do not know whether this is a proper marae or something similar that is only used for the performances.

At the Ledwich Lodge where we stay the rooms are spacious. At night I swim in a small but heated outdoor pool.

The following day we drive back to Lake Taupo and have lunch there again. Then we continue south. We see Mt Ruapehu in the distance.

At Wellington we stay overnight at Sharella Motor Inn. Or it could have

been Flag, I am not too sure. It is right behind the Botanic Garden.

The next day we go to Picton on a ferry.

The Wellington Botanic Garden was established in 1868 and was managed by the New Zealand Institut. It has come under the management of Wellington City Council since 1891.

In 1950 the Lady Norwood Rose Garden was being developed, in 1960 the Begonia House, and in 1991 the Treehouse Visitor Centre. The LN Rose Garden opened in 1953.

The Begonia House has the tropical and temperate displays. The tropical area contains orchids, aquatic plants including the giant water lily, *Victoria amazonica*, as well as some carnivorous and epiphytic plants. The temperate area has seasonal displays, namely gesneriads and tuberous begonias in summer and cyclamen, *cymbidium* orchids, *impatiens* and *primula* in winter.

The Bolton Street Memorial Park was the cemetery for the Wellington Colony during 1840–92. It also contains the Heritage Rose Collection. For fifty years it had been not one but three separate cemeteries, namely Church of England, Jewish and Public.

In the Garden there is the old Dominion Observatory built in 1907, the Carter Observatory and the Planetarium.

We return our car, the Ford Escort Blue registration number WN 2945 to the office at the pier, before boarding the ferry.

Linking between Wellington and Picton are the Interislander and the Lynx ferries. The one we are on is called Aratika, I guess an Interislander because the other one is said to be fast and ours is not.

If Wellington is not a bustling town, Picton is yet far more quiet by comparison. We had left our rented car at the ferry terminal before boarding the ferry, so we pick up another one here.

We have not driven far when a car overtakes us from behind and the two elderly people inside open their windscreen to tell us that one of our tyres is wobbling. So we go back to the car rental company, and I get off and watch the wheel while Nhan drives back and forth. Though I could see no wobbling in any one of the wheels we change our car anyway.

If the hub is not symmetrical around the centre of the wheel, the latter could give the appearance of wobbling whereas in fact it is not.

We drive south along the east coast of South Island. At one place I see a marvellous stretch of pink on the ground in the distance where water in a salt farm has dried up, showing the colour produced by the crystal.

We stop along the coast to have some crayfish. Further along the road we stop again to look at the basking seals at the Peninsula Seals Colony.

Generally on the left hand side of the road are the coast, cliff and ocean. On the right hand side are sometimes farms and sheep.

We have a brief look at Christchurch, at the Hagley Park and the Victoria Square, before carrying on further until we reach Ashburton.

Grown in plenty both sides of the road between Christchurch and Timaru are *pineis radiator* which was originally from the US. They seem to thrive here better than back home. It's timber is an important export of New Zealand. The wood gives off nice smell and is used for building works. From Australia are pine and eucalyptus.

This is a country where there are neither snakes nor dangerous wild lives. You can only see lions, for example, in zoos like the Orana Park which is an open zoo in Christchurch.

We drive from Picton to Kaikoura, Christchurch, then Ashburton where we stay with my dad and mum. The following day, Thursday 4th March 1999, we go via Lake Tekapo to Invercargill. I have been to this lake before, but its turquoise glacial lake still captures my attention as when I saw it for the first time.

The Church of the Good Shepherd stands by the edge of the lake. Inside the church you can see the view of the Southern Alps and Mount Cook through a window behind the silhouette of the Cross that stands in the middle of it.

A monument of the high-country sheep-dog, aka colly dog, stands high and nearby. This statue of the McKenzie dog was made by Innes Elliott.

The church was designed by R S D Harman. The foundation stone was laid on 15th January 1935, and the completed church dedicated on 3rd August 1935.

Constraints were heavily imposed on its construction, because the nature must not be disturbed. Rocks were not to be removed, which caused some parts of the wall to be built on rocks. Stones for the wall must come from within 5 miles radius, and must remain unchipped.

The original, wooden-shingled roof was replaced by slates in 1957. The wood that was used to make the cupboard in the Vestry was taken from the Tekapo Bridge which as demolished in 1954.

The area to the north of, and around Kaikoura is famous for its crayfish. These are no fish, but an edible crustacean that look like a small lobster. They are different from lobsters in that they have no clamps whereas lobsters have two. They are also softer and easier to eat than the latter.

To make a long story short, we visit Charlie and Jeanette in Invercargill where we stay at their Gala Lodge, which is their home as well as an excellent Bed and Breakfast. I would recommend it to anyone who happens to come to this city.

Then we drive to Te Anau, and then to the Milford Sound. The scenery along the way there is superb, what more can I say.

The weather forecast has not been good this morning, Friday 5^{th} March 1999, I have not lost track of the time. Charlie has said that if the weather worsen, they may close the Homer Tunnel, and it can be very inconvenient or even dangerous should we find ourselves on the other side of it if it does. But when the majority of us want to go there (myself included, if a co-pilot could also have a vote), what else can I do but follow, keeping my fingers crossed.

Fortunately the sky gradually lightens up. From Te Anau we pass Lake Gunn on the left and then Lake Furgus on the right. It is approximately 120 km between Te Anau and the Milford Sound.

In front of the tunnel a sign says that it is 15°C, there is a light rain, heavier rains on the mountain, and plenty of water so hopefully the waterfalls should be great. Regarding water for consumption, trekkers are advised to carry Puri Tabs, whatever this means.

'Milford Rd closed,' the sign continues, 'at the tunnel from 9 pm until 8 am everyday until further notice'. This sounds reasonable enough, nothing out of normal, because we hope that no business on the other side should make us stay there until that late.

At the Milford Sound all the peaks are covered with clouds. But the Fiordland is always wet, and I like this kind of weather when it is drizzling and overcast.

In his description of the Milford Sound, Captain Cook says, 'Peaks so close together as not to allow any vallies between them'.

On the way back the sky clears up so well we all feel refreshed. Between the Tunnel and the Milford Sound the road was winding, but now it becomes straight.

We travel by the State Highway 94, then State Highway 6, and stay in Garston. From the Milford Sound back to Te Anau we logged 124 kilometres on our meter.

The Northwesterly hits the Stewart Island first, and then the Southland from the south. It hits the lands head-on, and so is easy to forecast. By contrast, the winds that hit the West Coast are whirlwind, and are difficult to forecast.

To be registered on a book as a Bed and Breakfast costs $600–800 a year. Gardening in NZ costs, for an hour, from less than $10 up to $20 or more.

When morrow comes, it is Saturday. We visit Queenstown, Arrowtown, Alexandra, then drive to the West Coast where we pass the night.

While the Milford Sound is majestic and the Queenstown magnificent, the West Coast is among other things dramatic.

We start off early the next day. Before long we stop at the Fox Glacier and walk to its moraine to have a closer look. Precipitous cliffs surround the place where we park our car. A few buses also park there, for many people come here to look at the glacier.

Then we drive on along the coast, cut across the Southern Alps along the Arthur's Pass, and find ourselves again in the expansiveness of the Canterbury Plain.

The Arthur's Pass is in the Craigieburn Forest Park which has the area of 44,165 hectares, and which is well-known for its ski fields in winter. The Pass was built in 1865.

Here there are Candys Creek, which is a group of streams running down the face of the mountain. It looks like several Y-letters shaped from grooves.

Here also there is a bridge called, of all the names, 'Kowai' No. 2. The word is obviously a Maori word. But if it were Japanese, it would have meant 'ghastly'!

If you ever wonder looking at the steep walls of a glacial gorge, how it is possible for a river of snow to carve such a monstrous piece of work, then you may be interested to read the following lines.

Do not be deceived by the soft, white snow innocently lying on top of the glacier! Beneath the surface, the weight of the upper layer of the snow presses upon those beneath it until these lower layers become ice. It is this ice that cuts the rocks beneath.

As the middle part of the channel is thickest compared with all the other parts, the cut here is deeper. This trend accumulates so, that what began as a U-shaped channel soon becomes a V-shaped one like a knife, and then the edge of this knife becomes ever sharper.

On top of that, the pressure and the friction act to melt this ice, and the water gathers at the bottom of this groove in the rocks to become the subglacial stream that flows along until it emerge from the glacier snout at the terminal. This stream acts as a perfect lubricant, washes away the debris like sawdust, and take away the heat created by the cuttings as the result of which the ice becomes harder again to cut the deeper.

The Fox and Franz Josef glaciers are created from the same neve on a plateau in the Southern Alps. With the altitude 300–2,700 m above sea level, they are the most low-lying of their kind in the world. The neve is more than 300 m deep, and under its weight the ice is made at the depth of less than 100 m from the surface.

When her lover died, the goddess Hinemoa cried and both glaciers are her frozen tears.

The remote coastline of the Westland National Park is wild, and there are

dense rainforest and glaciers. It has an area of 117,547 hectares.

The Fiordland National Park has 1,257,000 hectares of area. It has dense rainforest, glacial lakes and valleys, fiords and snow-capped mountains. Its tramping tracks include the Milford, Dusky, Hollyford, Kepler and Routeburn.

The Mount Cook National Park is an alpine park which is 70,013 hectares in area and has both the highest mountain and the longest glacier in NZ.

The Mount Aspiring National Park has an area of 355,518 hectares. It has for tramping tracks the Routeburn, Gillespie Pass, Rees-Dart and West Matukituki. Together these four national parks mentioned make up the Southwest New Zealand World Heritage Area, which is also known as the Te Wahipounami Westland National Park.

While we were driving along the West Coast, there were birds flying so low crossing the road. We once hit one, which made us feel bad. We also saw hawks eating carcasses off the road.

At Hokitika it was hot, sunny and summer. How summer here is valued, compared with those tropical places with their unchanging weather! The summer here is life and remembrance themselves.

We meet my NZ family at Andy's place in Christchurch. Then I co-pilot us on a tour to the Littelton Harbour. We drive up the hills at Cashmere, pass Sign of the Kiwi to where *Nāuī*, *Òn* and I used to run when we stay at *Nāuī*'s place in 1983. We follow the coastline of the Harbour until we reach Lyttelton. The wind and the weather here are marvellous.

Along our way we sit at the rest area overlooking the Harbour, and find it difficult to leave the place to get into the car.

From Lyttelton we drive along State Highway 74 which passes through a long tunnel that must be no less than a mile long. The road brings us back to Christchurch, where we lose our way a little before we can find the Hagley Park.

We stop at the park to rest and walk around, and then we are off again. We find our State Highway 74 again and it soon turns into the State Highway 1 which is a motorway. It is getting dark because we had lost some time finding our way around, first to get to Christchurch and then to get away from it.

We take the small street to the right that leads us to the Gore Bay where we stay at a Bed and Breakfast.

It was already dark last night when we got here, so we could not see the beautiful scenery that our B & B commands. This morning, however, with the homely breakfast and such views as we can see from the living room's large windows, we all fall in love with the place and only wish that we could stay here forever and a day.

However we need to go, so having bid farewell to our hosts and their hos-

pitable place we drive back to State Highway 1 and follow the winding road up to Picton. It is amazing to see how Nhan drives.

Not long after we have passed Kaikoura, as we are driving down a gentle slope, I see a long pinkish line far away towards the horizon to the right. You have not seen beauty if you have not seen the salt-works, when dried, from the distant. It looks so pink and shining, as though someone has drawn using a fluorescent pen a line on the wall-paper, except that it is in three dimensions.

We make very good time, and arrive in Picton in time to return our car and get into the ferry at 10.30 bound for Wellington.

We return our car here, and pick up another one there. The car rental costs around $90 for a manual and $100 for an automatic car, plus tax. A one-way rental is possible with an extra $30.

We drive to Wanganui where we have our tea, and then further on to Hawera where we spend the night. From here Mt Egmont is very close by.

We have a good view of it in the morning while we drive along the road up north. These conic volcanoes are amazing because they have numerous rivers radiating from their central peak.

Mt Egmont is also known as Mt Taranaki. The area around it is now the Egmont National Park, which must be the most circularly-shaped national park in NZ.

Then we drive north pass Te Kuiti to Otorohanga where we stop at the Kiwi House, which is a native bird park operated by the Otorohanga Zoological Society.

The Kiwi is a flightless bird which belongs to the order of ratite birds that includes the cassowaries (Australia and New Guinea), the emu (Aust.), the moa (NZ, now extinct), the ostrich (South Africa) and the rheas (South America).

The three species of Kiwi are the Brown, the Little Spotted and the Great Spotted. There are four subspecies of the Brown Kiwi, namely the North Island Brown, the South Island Brown, the Stewart Island Brown and the Tokoeka which was discovered only recently in the Haast area of Westland.

The nostrils of a Kiwi are at the tip of the bill instead of at the base of the same. The wings end in a primitive claw, and are some 30 to 50 mm long.

Incubation period varies from 72 to 84 days,. They lay eggs of enormous size compared with the size of their body. They eat beetles and their larvae, caterpillars, cicadas, earthworms, spiders, berries and seed. Here they are made to eat all sorts of things from ox hearts to bananas, minced meat, oats, sultanas, tofu and vitamins.

Outside the House there are aviaries for the Barry Rowe, Kea, Kaka and Wader. There are also the banded dotterel, barn owls, falcons, harriers,

moreporks, spur-winged plovers, water-fowls and teal (Auckland Island and brown).

The Tuatarium houses the tuatara, *Sphenodon punctatus*, which is often referred to as a *living fossil*. It is the sole survivor of the Rhynchocephalia, an ancient order of reptiles which were common throughout the world more than 200 million years ago. Their colour varies from grey, olive to brickish red. Males are larger than females, and may be as large as 600 mm long and weigh up to 1,000 g.

Here you also have Australian Coot, Banded Dotterel, Bellbird, Blue Duck, Karariki or parakeets, Kokako or Blue-wattled Crow, North Island Saddleback, NZ Dotterel or Red-breasted Dotterel, NZ pigeon, Paradise Shelduck, Pied Stilts, Pukeko or swamp hen, Scaup, Shoveler, Silvereyes, Tui, Weka and White-faced Heron. There are native trees which include Beeches (Red, Silver and Black), Five Finger, Hinau, Kahikatea, Kamahi, Kanuka, Karaka, Karamu, Kauri, Kohekohe, Kohuhu, Kowhai, Lacebark, Mahoe, Manuka, Matai, Miro, Papauma, Pohutukawa, Poro Poro, Puka, Pukatea, Puriri, Rewa Rewa, Rimu, Tanekaha, Tarata, Titoki, Toa Toa, Totara and Wineberry.

Rimu is the Red Pine or *Dacrydium cupressinum*. The trees may reach 50 metre tall. Their branchlets hang down, while their leaves are almost needle-like when juvenile and scale-like, 2.5–3 mm long, when adult.

From here we drive towards the Kaimai Range before we go around it from Paeroa to Waihi on the Bay of Plenty, aka Whatarahanga.

The Kaimai Range is home to the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park which has an area of 39,682 hectares and contains, among other things, bush walks, old gold mining and kauri milling sites, and rock climbing.

North of this forest park is the Coromandel Forest Park with its 74,961-hectare area, historic mining and milling sites, volcanic land forms, and various activities which include diving.

We go along the Pacific Coastal Highway, but have to cut our driving short for we are running late. We cut across to Thames at the far end of the Firth of Thames, then drive to Auckland where we stay at the Silver Point Flag, 3 km from the Airport.

I remember we visited a church somewhere, where on the stained-glass is written 'IHS', that is for the Latin *Iesu Hominum Salvatore*.

Polynesian people inhabited the Pacific Islands and the Pacific Island peoples settled in New Zealand around AD 700 or earlier. We call these people *tangata whenua* who were moa hunters.

The ancestors of the Maori people today came three centuries later. According to Legends they came from Hawaiki nui, Hawaiki roa, and Hawaiki pamamao, thought to be islands in the central Pacific.

Among them was Kuper, the explorer who discovered New Zealand. Or it could have been his wife, Hine-te-aparangi, because it was her who cried out, 'He ao! He ao!', a phrase which gives rise to the name 'the land of the long white cloud' or *Aotearoa*. After that it was Toi who started the Great Migration, the coming of people over the period of several centuries in many canoes.

Because these canoes landed at different places of the islands, they developed into separate tribes. There were altogether 40 such tribes, so this was perhaps the approximate number of surviving canoes among which were Tainui, Te Arawa, Maataatua, Kurahaupo, Tokomaru, Aotea, Takitimu, Horouta and Nga tokimatawhaorua.

The first thing one Maori says to another is asking where he is from. Now that most Maoris live in the city, urban tribes has developed according to geographical location. For instance, Maoris who live in Wellington are known as Ngati Poneke while those who live in Auckland as Ngati Akarana.

The *marae* is a place where meetings are carried out and distinguished visitors received. The finest of Maori poetry can be found in chants lamenting the dead in funeral ceremonies or *tangihanga*. *Haka* is a war dance which also marks manhood of the performers while *poi* is a graceful dance of women. Both are performed with performers wearing the *piupiu* or grass skirt.

Panels resting along the walls and posts supporting the ridge-pole are carved in ancestor images and tribal history.

During the first half of the twentieth century the carver's art nearly became lost, but for the government sponsorship established the Maori Arts and Crafts Centre at Rotorua. The *moko* or tattoo is no longer observed in newer generations.

Abel Janszoon Tasman, a Dutchman, discovered Nieuw Zeeland in 1642, a few centuries after the Maori migration. In 1769 Lieutenant James Cook, travelling in the Endeavour, landed at Poverty Bay two days after sighting the land.

James Busby came in 1833 to maintain law and order. Then William Hobson came in 1839 to negotiate with the Maori people. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed on 6 February 1840 by Maori chiefs and representatives of the Crown. This date had been made public holiday, the Waitangi Day which was later changed to New Zealand Day.

In the morning, Wednesday 10^{th} March 1999 , I fly off to Cairns at 7 am. All the others in our companionship have half day more to spend while waiting for their Daiï Airways flight in the afternoon.

I have no worries whatever for them, since Nhan is there and no one in our group is as apt in big cities as she is. Though I did plan the route, it was she who singlehandedly organised the get-together and in effect the whole trip

was only possible because of her.

Moreover, she had lived in the New York City of all places, the one of the few places on earth that I dread, and even enjoy herself living there!

The accounts of what my companions do after I have left Auckland you shall have to ask one of them yourself, if you want to know. As I am not there with them, I know next to nothing.

Walking inside the Auckland International Airport, I spied written on a T-shirt on sale there, 'I support two teams, NZ, and anyone playing against Australia'.

Vaen says this is called *bosom enemies*.

QF14 drops me off in Cairns, then it too is gone from our scene, at least as far as I am concerned. I take a bus into town, check myself into the YHA there. The place stands right on the promenade, so there is no better place if you want to be near the sea.

My room is on the first floor. It has a huge window which opens on to the top of a canopy which covers the ground in front of the building.

The canopy is so huge and inviting, that I am tempted to climb over the window sill to walk about on it. This, however, I do not.

I can still remember how the roof of the bicycle shade gave way when I climbed over the window sill of our sword room at Montfort College and walked on it. Before I knew what happened, I found myself stuck in the hole in the roof, with my whole body from my armpits down dangling in mid-air. Australian roofs should be tougher, but who knows.

But I sit on the window sill with my back to the room and my face towards the sea, and I fall in love with this place.

I walk around, to the railway station and then to the piers. People here talks more roughly than the Kiwis, but you get used to it in no time. It has rained, but now it merely drizzles.

At the railway station I come across the information on the Kuranda Scenic Railway. The brochure for this looks extremely attractive.

The return ticket for an adult is $40. For a student it could be $26 provided that you have a current full-time Australian ID card. I try my best and ask whether there could be any discount for someone who holds a YHA Membership card. But unlike in NZ, the YHA card is not normally accepted here, as it proves to be the case this time.

But amazingly when I say that I am a student overseas, and show the staff my Japanese University ID Card, he agrees that I could buy a student ticket. However, I am going to buy no tickets now, but instead shall buy one tomorrow.

In the evening I walk explore the promenade, which is not difficult. There is a market close to the YHA, but there must be only a little more than ten shops or so, selling souvenirs and T-shirts.

Every evening you can get a free meal ticket from the YHA to dine at a bar by the hostel. The food is invariably either grilled steak or beer battered fish and chips.

Behind the counter at the Youth Hostel is always Erin. He says he is known as Cliff Richard. Other staffs are Sean from Canada, Charlie who says his name is Yasser Arafat (b. 1929), Andy, and the two girls Orla and Taffy the latter one of whom comes from Wales.

I go to Kuranda on Thursday 11$^{\text{th}}$ March. This is a scenic railway. I arrive at the railway station ahead of time. There are some students from Japan in front of me in the queue. They are also buying the tickets to go to Kuranda, but the staff who sells them their tickets tells them, 'No, I'm sorry but you can't use your student cards here. It says here a current full-time *Australian* student ID card'.

My turn is next, and I am quite prepared to pay the full fare.

'One student return to Kuranda, please?', I says as a matter of fact.

'Have you got your Student ID Card?', he asks, I should have guessed.

'Yes, but ...', I start, thinking that I should show him my student card anyway.

Then the staff with whom I talked yesterday looks up and sees me and I him, and he says from behind the other staff, 'That's all right. He was here yesterday and I had looked at his card', he lightly concludes with a wink. In the lounge I talk with the two students, but I never tell them how much the ticket has costed me. One should be discreet.

Our train starts at 8.30 am to go to Kuranda from Cairns. My place then is Seat 7 of Car 11. On the way back the trian leaves from Kuranda at 3.30 pm, and my place is Seat 29 in Car 5. The $26 rail fare that I paid includes $1 of Mareeba Levy. I stay at the YHA for $16 a night.

This railway line runs along 34 kilometres of the original Cairns–Kuranda track constructed in 1882. In only 100 minutes it rises 328 m from sea level, goes through dense rainforest, crosses waterfalls and passes through 15 tunnels all hand-carved.

The train is really a relic. The interior of the coaches is mostly wooden. The lamps on the ceiling is shaped like the Canterbury Bell. The seats are hard, wooden seats, much similar to the third-class coaches still in normal operations in Daiï.

From Cairns the train travels 10 km to the Freshwater Connection Station, passing the Cairns Airport on the right. Then it goes 13 km, through 13

tunnels to the Stoney Creek Falls, and then another 8 km and passing through two tunnels until we reach the Barron Falls which is 3 km away from the Kuranda Station.

From here there is a Skyrail which goes up to the top of the mountain, but which my ticket does not include. I walk around, visit a library, buy a small umbrella. It is very hilly around here.

There is a huge boat set up beside the street and used as a restaurant. It is not a boat, only a building shaped like one. But it stands as though it is meant to float rather than rooted to the ground this way. I walk in there and upstairs, and it really impresses me.

But a guitarist is playing, and he plays in scales. I look at things displayed in the shops, then board the train to return to Cairns.

The Falls we saw along the railway line on our way here was spectacular. There had been a long bout of rains, so there was plenty of water on the mountains. The train stopped to let people get out and have a look. We walked on to the platform holding our umbrella or in our cap or raincoat, stood at the rails, and watched the waterfalls.

When it is dark, I walk to the Pier Marketplace, which is a large building inside which there are offices of various travelling companies. It is behind the Fogarty Park, while behind it are the piers. The Park is right at the waterfront on The Esplanade, which is the street I called the *promenade* earlier.

I buy a trip to go snorkelling with Compass in the morning. It costs Aust $55, which includes free use of the mask, fins and snorkel, a buffet lunch, and boom netting.

Friday 12$^{\text{th}}$ March 1999, at 7.45 we board the boat on Pier A. It takes more than one hour to go to the Hastings Reef in the Outer Barrier Reef. We sail through the gap between the Green Island and the Arlington Reef on our right, and the Upolu Cay and the Oyster Reef on our left, all four of which are in the Inner Barrier Reef.

At Hastings Reef we anchor. Then you can try the scuba free of charge. At the end of the trial you will be asked whether you would go for a dive. I don the diving gear, which comprises an aqualung, a diving mask, a pair of flippers, a weight belt and harness for the driving apparatus, and then join about five others for a underwater trial.

We are told to breathe normally through our mouth. I feel that it is easier to do this than snorkelling where you always suck in water, especially with the waves and all.

At the end of the trial I was the last one to be asked whether I would go ahead for a dive. All my companions have answered that they want to go along, and so with no reason whatsoever that is my reply. The instructor asks the question by making an 'OK' sign with his hand, and you answer

with the same sign and move it forwards twice to say that you want to come along.

We dive down about ten metres. The bottom is partly sand and partly coral. There are some colourful fish and schools of smaller ones. We see a ray or a skate.

A shark comes and circles round us once, and then it goes away. It is a black-tipped reef shark, no less than two metres long.

We look at the corals, so full of life. Then the shark comes again. I do not know whether it is the same one. It starts to swim around us, then disappears again. It swims so close, must be no more than five metres away. I can see its eyes and most of its details. This time our instructor signals to us to say that we are returning to the boat.

We pull up our anchor and sail further on to the Michaelmas Reef, where we anchor again. Here about half of us snorkel. As usually is the case whenever I try my hand on snorkelling, I drink some sea water. But sea water is unique. You only drink a little of it and it is as good as drinking a pint, or as bad for that matter.

Then we do the boom netting, which is done by dragging a net behind the running boat with people clinging to it. The parts that are most fun to hang on to are along the edges of the wake, where the water is turbulent.

On our way back I feel a little sea-sick, and throw up. There may be some complimentary wine and cheese, but how mean of them to offer these at this time.

'Of course, you would never be able to have any', I think.

Then I put my head down flat on the table and already feel better. You get used to the sea by and by. The worst part is when the trip ends when you have just started to enjoy it. Sadly this is normally the case.

We watch the video that our professional video-man has been busy filming. As I appear in it several times, and because there were there also the sharks, I decide in the end to order one. I only want to show it to my parents.

The company is doing well indeed. I never thought that I would ever dive, and now I have to pay another $45 for having done it. I never watch videos, but I have just ordered one which would cost me $45.

I say to myself that I will never again in my life dive. But how soon does one change one's mind! It is almost like when I had tried to quit smoking without success, no less than three times.

Now it has been at least two years since I last smoked. And I had said nothing to myself this fourth time that I was going to give up the cigarettes.

No sooner than we reach Cairns, I take a shower and dress, dinner eaten

and happy, than I find myself walking to the Pier Marketplace again without my knowing it, and there buy a ticket for another boat trip tomorrow.

> Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,
> Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.

There's the *Love's Labour's Lost* (1593–95) again.

The video of our dive had been sent to me at the YHA. It is made by H2O Video & Photo.

The Great Barrier Reef is 50–70 km wide and more than 2,000 km long. You can see it from the moon.

Saturday 13th March 1999, to the Green Island, this time on a sailing boat run by the Ocean Free. We leave from Pier A at 9 am, and sail to a place where we moor, snorkel and then have a smorgasbord lunch.

I meet here several Japanese people. We talk and enjoy our time together. I am not sure if there are white-tipped reef sharks or only black ones. When you snorkel, you blow out hard and breathe in softly. You push your mask at the temple, put head up and blow air through your noses whenever there is water in your mask.

When you dive with the aqualung, you blow out softly. You push the front button when remounting the tube underwater.

'Scuba' originated as an acronym for Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus], and 'snorkel' came from the German word *schnörkel* which means 'spiral'. It was previously written *schorkel.*

The organising staffs are Nick who is the captain, Anna who comes from Norway, Richard from Windsor, Emma from west of Manchester, and Sharon from Winchester, that is to say, all the last three of whom comes from the UK.

We go to the Green Island where we walk around and relax. Then we go snorkelling again. This time there is a diving demonstration for those who want to dive.

The cloud comes and it starts to rain, but we are happy on our way back.

It rains heavier when we reach Cairns. It is nearly 6 pm, and I just make it in time for my dinner.

After I have eaten, I walk to the Cone Cay Villa where my Japanese friends stay. It is further inland and then a long walk to the right. It is still raining and parts of the road are badly flooded. At several points there is nothing you could do but walk through the water.

The strong wind is making my umbrella useless, but I hold on to it all the same. I hold the handle of the umbrella in both hands, each hand holding

each of its ends. But it is not a strong umbrella, and flips out of shape several times that I throw it away in the morning.

I arrive Cone Cay Villa soaking wet and shaking uncontrollably from the cold. They put me in a shower, after which I feel warm again and greatly refreshed. They clad me in the hotel's bathrobe, then make some green tea and hot food for me.

There are Akiko, Kana, Masa, Nobuko and Yuko. We have a good, long talk late into the night for they say they do not mind, and seem to mean so. Then I say goodbye and walk back to the YHA, again in the rain.

In the morning the following day, Sunday 14^{th}, I take an Airporter minibus from in front of the Lyons Hotel and go to the Airport, the ticket of which costs $4.50. My flight this time is QF69 which leaves at 12.10.

—

> Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James, 2: 18)

> Gott nimmt uns die Last des Lebens nicht ab, aber er gibt die Kraft zum Tragen.
>
> John Henry Newmann

> Die meisten Verbrennungen entstehen dadurch, daß jemand für jemand anderes die Hand ins Feuer legt.

—

Interested readers may find the following two books useful, Ken Francis's *The New Zealand Kiwi*, Whitcoulis, 1971 (1982) for one, and Witi Ihimaera's *Maori*, A R Shearer, Government Printer, Wellington, New Zealand, 1975 for another

A British Lāṇṇạ

§

The National Lottery was launched in November 1994. Lottery tickets cost £1 each. The player chooses six numbers between 1 and 49, and wins a prize if three or more of them match the winning numbers drawn each week.

The jackpot is divided among the luckiest winners, if there are more than one, and is carried over to the following week if no one matches all his six numbers.

The prize money comprises 50 per cent of the weekly takings, 28 per cent goes to arts, charities, national heritage and other good causes, 12 per cent becomes taxes while the remaining 10 per cent goes to its operators the Camelot Consortium and approximately 10,000 retail outlets.

The Millennium Fund is funded by the Lottery money, and so are the literature books given to major libraries in Daiï.

Manchester in 1994 is a quiet town. I come here to study at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, or UMIST as it is always called. I study Control Systems in The Mill, which is one of the buildings of the university. We study nine months of course works, and then there is a three month period to do your dissertation project. Towards the end of 2000 I come back again to do my PhD.

The Greater Manchester is a metropolitan county of northwest England that was created in 1974. In 1986 most of the functions of the county council were transferred to metropolitan district councils, namely Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport and Wigan.

The Manchester Ship Canal was opened in 1894 and links the city of Manchester with the River Mersey and the sea. It is 35.5 miles long, 45–80 feet wide, has five locks and links Manchester to Eastham in Merseyside. It turns Manchester into a port city and has brought ocean-going vessels to this inland centre of the Industrial Revolution.

In the Romans' time Manchester was a camp known as Mancunium or Mamucium. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book, a survey record compiled in 1086 under William the Conqueror. By the 13^{th} century it has become a centre of the wool trade.

On 16 August 1819 there was an attack by Yeomanry and hussars on people gathering in St Peter's Fields in Manchester in an open-air meeting to support the parliament reform, the Peterloo massacre, when eleven people were killed and 500 wounded.

The *Manchester Guardian* was founded in 1821, now the *Guardian*, a national newspaper.

Among the many newspapers in the UK, the *Guardian* is owned by a non-profit trust. *The Times* and the *Independent* is popular among the rich, so their advertising space is more expensive. The *Observer* was started in 1791.

In 1500 the English printer Wynkyn de Worde set up the first press in Fleet Street, London. The first newspaper *Mercurius Gallobelgicus* was printed in London in 1590. In 1701 Francis Burgess founded the *Norwich Post*, which was the first newspaper to be published outside London. E. Mallet's *Daily Courant* came out on 2 March 1702.

Then came in 1730–1807 the *Daily Advertiser*, in 1778 the *Whitehall Evening Post* with its sport news, in 1780 the *British Gazette and Sunday Monitor.*

The first newspaper in Welsh is the *Seren Gomer* which was launched on 1st January 1814.

The Times began to include photographs in 1842, and daily weather forecasts in 1875. In 1881 came the *Evening Illustrated Newspaper*, and in 1900 Cyril Arthur Pearson's *Express.*

In 1967 the *London Daily Express* was transmitted electronically to Puerto Rico. Rupert Murdoch from Australia bought the *Sun* in 1969 and turned it into a tabloid. In 1990 the *Northern Echo* in Darlington put newspaper on CD-ROM.

The rivers Irk, Irwell, Medlock, Mersey and Tib flow through the city, parts of which are now underground.

The Mersey-Irwell Canal was established in 1720 to connect Liverpool and Manchester, the Bridgewater Canal from Worsley to Manchester in 1763 to carry coal from collieries of the 3rd Duke of Bridgewater to the city, and the westward extension of it to Runcorn in 1766. At the end of the 18th century canals were built to Bolton, Huddersfield, Oldham, Rochdale and Todmorden.

In 1830 a railway connected Liverpool and Manchester's station on Liverpool Road. A line to Bolton was opened in 1838, to Leeds in 1841, to Birmingham and London in 1842, and to Sheffield and Lincolnshire in 1845.

The Exchange Station, built in 1844, was connected by a long platform to Victoria Station in 1845. A line to Altrincham was opened in 1849.

Central Station was begun in 1867 and the Store Street station of 1842 became firstly London Road station and then Piccadilly Station.

During the 18th century more affluent people lived in Didsbury, Fallowfield and Withington to the south which is the least industrialised part of the city, in particular places beside the railway line to Altrincham. In 1951 Manchester and its surrounding cities were defined as a conurbation.

The town hall designed by Alfred Waterhouse and completed in 1877 has a spire 285 feet high. The Free Trade Hall was Renaissance in its style. The Midland Hotel was built in 1898 and the Young Men's Christian Association in 1909.

In 1996 an IRA bomb exploded in the Arndale Shopping Centre.

On top of the Free Trade Hall along Windmill Street there are figures of men or various professions in reliefs. These sit on top of the columns on a huge wall which covers the whole length of the building and rises up to approximately five storeys high, giving a solemn and timeless look.

I used to sit on a bench and looked at these figures for a long time.

With its Grade II status it is listed in the top six per cent of nationally listed buildings. According to Manchester's Lord Mayor William Collingson in 1951 it symbolises the traditional independence of Manchester's people, their love of liberty, tolerance and fearless loyalty to ideals.

The city council wants to sell the building, and after two years of campaign a petition was made by the Friend of the Free Trade Hall and the Civic Society that led to a nine-day public inquiry and the proposal being rejected in October 1998.

The fourth proposals effaces everything except for the Peter Street frontage and three bays in Southmill Street, and turns the building into a 16-storey hotel.

In 2002 the part opposite to the Manchester Convention Centre with its reliefs was pulled down.

To me this seems a mistake. I do hope that they have preserved those figures on the columns' top and installed them in a safe place, even though more likely they would have lost the hypnotising effect they had enjoyed in the setting above that plain rectangle underneath. That overall composition is priceless compared with the whole of the present MCC.

It is true the two are different, for the former has character and is thus better.

It is sad when something has to go only because they are different. But other newer buildings are luckier, especially those which come with exterior ornate terracotta.

Conservation depends on our current tastes, or at least our decision on what to throw away and what to keep does.

An example of this is the two buildings dated from the early 1900s and 1960s that used to house the National Boiler and the General Insurance Company headquarters near Parsonage Gardens, which are renovated into the £1 million penthouse Century Buildings, designed by Assael Architecture for the developers Nicholson Estates.

Here in Manchester was born and lived the painter Laurence Stephen Lowry (1887–1976). He developed in the 1920s a style characterised by naive matchstick figures, which I think is influenced by the works of Pieter Bruegel (?1525/1530–1569), especially the latter's *Les Chasseurs dans la neige* (1565). He has painted some historically invaluable scenes.

In September 2000 I came back to Manchester again in order to do a PhD in Language. The Department has recently split into two parts, that is Translation and Language Engineering. I stick to the former because the tuition fee is cheaper.

Ken is still working in Bristol. I have never been there, but I can talk with him via the Internet. I told him that I plan to write a book on *Moaï Daiï* (Moaï Daiï) and he says he want to read it sometimes. He thinks that UMIST is a bit boring compared to Manchester Uni.

They are completing the M60 ring road around Manchester. In October 1960 the Stretford-Eccles bypass, M63, was opened. Back then a gallon of petrol costed less than 30 pence.

The motorway era also means the drastic reduction of road accidents. Between 1926 and 1960 the per cent death by road accidents dropped by one order. By 1998 it had dropped further by another half an order.

The bus deregulation brought with it many problems. The standards declined, the buses became old and dilapidated, the fares rises, but evening and Sunday services were being withdrawn and through-ticketing lessens.

People tried to avoid travelling by bus, and between 1986 and 1996 the number of passengers boarding dropped by more than 30 per cent. Now the GMPTE is trying to improve this. I met some people on board the bus asking me to fill a questionnaire.

That was when we went to Gaby's place for a party. Carmen has already arrived, and I am doing some translating jobs. Gaby introduced us all to her friend who owns a company that does translations, but he was not interested in a Daiï who also knows Japanese.

The majority of old buildings in Manchester are built in the 19^{th} century. Most buildings listed as Grade I, however, are those built during the 18^{th} century, for example the Heaton Hall (1772) in Heaton Park.

I have seen pictures of three dilapidated 17^{th}-century buildings, namely the Clegg Hall (*c.*1610) in Milnrow, the Old Hall Chapel (late 16^{th} or early 17^{th} century) in Dukinfield, and the Staley Hall (16^{th} or 17^{th} century) in Stalybridge. These are all listed buildings considered at risk.

Another Grade I building in the Manchester area which is at risk is the Baguley Hall in Baguley which was built during late mediaeval.

All the other areas have their own share of buildings at risk, that is Bolton,

Bury, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside and Wigan. Those older ones are the Apethorn Farmhouse (Hyde, 15^{th} century) and the Hyde Hall (Denton, late 16^{th} century) in Tameside, and the Staircase House (Market Place, late 15^{th} or 16^{th} century).

It is good that the Lottery is with us. The Heritage Lottery Fund has decided to fund the Victoria Baths in Longsight. Firstly the Victoria Baths Partnership will build The Spring, a living centre at the complex in Hathersage Road.

My second book has turned out to be useful to myself. I have already used it several times when doing translation from Daiï into English. As you probably know that translation from Daiï into English is more difficult to do than that from English into Daiï, but that is what I have been doing most of the times now.

Harry Potter has become a hit in Daiï after *Lord of the rings* by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892–1973).

I have also heard people say that is a good book. But I am a bit skeptical because I do not follow other people's definition of good books, even though my idea sometimes agrees with theirs. I want to translate Shakespeare's works. I find his Sonnets are subtle and difficult to translate. So I probably will turn to translating his *Julius Caesar* first.

The progress is very slow at the moment. I have got a new computer to work on, and I am trying to get used to it.

Mona has given me a desk and a computer. She wants me to do something on the Translation Corpus for her in Java and XML. Graham went over to the Translation group one day to talk with her and Peter. Mona says he regards my ability highly. But to me he says he wants me to put down everything else and concentrate on only Voronoi Network and Percolation.

I join the Community Action at UMIST again. One Saturday we go together to a house of a disabled elderly to do gardening. There are Catherine who is a staff, Mary a Malaysian student and Alissa from some Chinese-speaking country.

Both Alissa and Mary will do the home-visiting scheme. But I probably will not do it again, since Clare is now in an elderlies' home and no longer need my visit, and I do not want to just visit anybody.

We cut the grass in the backyard garden and trim the bushes in front of the house. For lunch Catherine lets our client pay for the fish and chips. I wish she had used our own budget instead.

I am now helping John doing the Day Care project where elderly people come to UMIST on Wednesday afternoon, and we sit down and talk to one another in a room in the Main Building.

My brother's son *Nhŭeng* enters the Jiangmhăị University in *Jiangmhăi* where he becomes a good student, at the top of his class. If there is an opportunity of getting a *Karrmkạrkhàṛạjkạr Bolruan (KB)* scholarship for doing degrees in the States it would be very good for him too.

Contrary to what people in Daiï believed in the past, I am sure that there will be no problems doing your first degree overseas. The world is getting smaller and smaller all the time. Even with what telecommunication and Internet infra-structure we have got now, I feel that going to other countries has become a help instead of a hindrance.

I never believe in the *reverse brain-drain* policy of calling all the professionals of Daiï nationality back to Daiï to serve this nation. I always advocate a distributed system where you work wherever possible for the benefit of the whole world, which incidentally includes the country the nationality of which you hold.

The weather here is getting colder. Today is 19 November 2000, I have got a lot of things to do. I am just starting to do my project. The progress is slow, and I fear that it will be so for a while.

There are a few hindrances which make the going not as quick as it should be. I also have to polish up my computer skill and learn more. I have been doing a few translation jobs. I might have to find a job in a restaurant also if I want to save some money for what I want to do afterwards.

I would like to work on Language and Literature in the future.

Have been unable to write any book so far since I have been here. This is no good! It has been quite a while since my second book came out. I would really love to see another one. I no longer want to look at the previous two.

Today the weather has been nice, and it was hot. Two days ago I went with some friends to Middlebrough, which is northeast of, and about one hour driving from Manchester. It was a good trip.

There are pianos here at UMIST that I could play. They are in the rooms C2 and C16 in the Reynold Building and C14 and the Entrance Hall in the Main Building. The ones in C2 and in the Entrance Hall are grand pianos, and between them the latter one is the older and the one I prefer. But later someone comes and tunes it, and after that everything is wrong and all the harmonies becomes a chaos. I think the dampers and the mechanism must have become loose.

Friday 1st December 2000, only one month to go before the Y2K ends. The year 2000 has not been a havoc as many people had feared. It could be because we are well prepared. I used to see in a mainframe-computer journal of as early as 1980s this problem of the computer coping with the change of the date from 1999 to 2000.

Simon has just received his PhD, and now he is working with the Informa-

tion Support Department. I have had troubles using Netscape on Cosmos, our Unix machine, and today he is going to look into it for me. They are having teething troubles with their new query reporting software, and he apologises me for replying late.

Zaiem also looks after the machine, and he later teaches me how to kill a job in a queue by using `qdel`.

I am doing a research in Chemical Engineering (CE) now. Perhaps I will start being a PhD student again in January. The department will pay for the cost of living as well as for the tuition fee. I much later learn, however, that this is from my supervisor Graham's personal fund.

I could also do part-time jobs sometimes. So for me it is good to be here compared to my last two years with nothing to do in Daiï.

I should like to do research on Language and Literature as well as on Engineering. Who knows, I might come to do some on, for example, Polovtsian's weaponry and fighting style. Or even on Polovtsian dances, for that matter.

I do not yet have any plan for Christmas. Our Community Action is organising a Christmas Party for the elderlies. It is going to be early on next month. The weather is getting colder.

Ikan is a Malay word for fish. It is also the name of a restaurant near UMIST which boasts Daiï food, but the owner of which is no Daiï. Another Japanese restaurant where I have been thinking about doing a part-time job as a cook has an owner who is from Philippine.

Today is 5 December 2000. Tomorrow there is going to be a Christmas Party by CA for elderly people. I will be there helping them arrange the place.

The weather is fine half of the time, while for the rest it is cloudy. There is never a heavy rain, though there had been some hail and hail sleet last month. To have these early days of winter like this might mean that there will be sleet snow, or even snow, after Christmas.

There has been a flood in *Songkhla* in south of Daiï, 9 December. I have another email address, `mjkvjkt@fs1.ce.umist.ac.uk`, which is Chemical Engineering's.

I write to John my teacher, 12 December, to say that I have come back to do a PhD at the Chemical Engineering Department. I ask him whether it is possible that I have a Unix account at the Control System Centre again. About this I have already asked Susan who said that I should ask him first to see whether CE will pay for my access.

I want to use the AVS geometry programme on cosmos.umist. The programme cannot display its graphical output when accessed from a PC, and CE no longer houses a Unix.

UMIST's computers have split from the Manchester Information Centre at the University of Manchester, and is now at its trough.

This *no-Unix* policy, being extended to Linux and the likes, strongly smells of influences from that true government of the US, Microsoft, and its owner Bill. I saw attached to the door at one computer facility of the University of Manchester a printout which says that any student of UMIST found using the computer there will be handed over to the police and prosecuted for trespassing. I remember being flabbergasted myself when I saw this.

I sincerely offer my help with no high hope for the results, for the Control System Centre is currently running out of funds. Anyhow, whatever I know there are always people at CSC who knows better.

In front of the Student Union I was stopped by Jane who said that she had just arrived from China. She guessed that I must either come from China or speak Chinese, and was surprised to learn that neither was the case. She only wanted to ask whether I knew about any Christmas parties of Chinese people. I cannot imagine her coming all this distance here just to do this.

December comes quickly when Maki is in the US and has Test Of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE) exams coming up, 11 December 2000.

Wednesday 13$^{\text{th}}$ December, Yukiko writes from Tokyo to say that she has no digital cameras, or else she would have sent me some pictures. She is a photographer of Tokyo's Meguro's council.

The following day Michiko says that she has heard from her that I had shut myself up in my home in Ḅaṇgkauk like a ninja, and she reminds me that I still have not answered the Christmas card she sent last year, which makes me feel guilty. But being a hermit is a good excuse.

She no longer works as an interpreter at the City Office, but has now switched to doing translations after having taken some courses.

Our Day Care go together to the Cheshir Line Tavern for lunch. Catherine is leaving CA soon, so this is also to say farewell to her.

Mrs Sloan gives me a big box of chocolate for Christmas. Joan and Betty give me a card which turns out to have a £5 note inside. Mrs Davenport and Mrs Millns give me £2, which makes me feel a little uneasy because we are volunteers.

But I keep the money, and later buy some piano music at reduced price from the library at the RNCM. It is raining all the time, so we cannot go to the garden outside. John is also here because he is the project leader.

Sunday 17$^{\text{th}}$ December, it has been very cold for a couple of days. I think we may have snow this year. If so, there will have been snow every time I am in England, and that has been once every five years because the first time

I was here was in 1989, then the second time during 1994-5 and now it is 2000-1. From what I have heard, there had been no snow whenever I stayed away.

Nothing much happens around here at this time of the year because it is coming on to Christmas and New Year. Most people have gone home for the celebration.

Both Zen and *Cīk* write me emails to tell how our Greek class in Ḅaṇgkauk is doing.

Zen now works part-timely at the Tops supermarket. It costs her 15 *ḅaḍ* an hour to email. This term she learns Indian History, but she failed a exam in Greek. She wants to write a novel.

Tuesday 19th December, I start working part-time at the *yakitori* restaurant Samsi. Hohei is the manager, Simon looks after the bar and Naoki the chef. I work here about a month, not everyday but around twice a week. Then I decide to stop because I find our chef rather a difficult person, and because I can learn nothing new here.

Well it is now 22 December 2000. I like the look of the date today, 22–12–2000.

I am no good at keeping in touch with people. I can still remember vividly the last time Michiko, Yukiko and me met. They took me to an aquarium which proves to be a good and memorable experience, similar to the Meguro City tours they earlier organised, for instance the one when we went to a rubbish incinerator plant and another one where we went to an earthquake prevention centre.

I am glad I did go along at that time. Work we do forget about, but these things we never do.

I had been like a hermit or a ninja for sometimes after I had gone back to Daiï. I had then been out of job for a very long time, and to go out invariably meant to have to spend some money.

I had applied to no less than 100 jobs, without success. I had regretted then I had not persevered harder while in Japan.

I put off answering letters. This year I have not written a single card. I either have become unsocialable or, to be more merciful to myself, have come to retain only the bare necessities of life. I did not feel that I was up to writing to anyone for the past two years that I was in Daiï.

During those two years I took to teaching English to two small classes at a private tutoring school, one after another. Otherwise I lived solely on the meagre income that came from those materials and documents I had been asked to translate.

I used to go to various shops that advertise a translation service, and left

them one of my make-shift business cards. But I could have become richer than I am now translating, had I not declined all those jobs that I did not think interesting enough to do.

Those that I did translate tended to be difficult and poorly paid albeit interesting. Among these was one medical paper about a research for new medicines to combat baldness. It is written in Portuguese, and I was asked to translate it into Daiï.

Apart from this I have written two books. They are both written in Daiï on subjects related to the English language. One is titled 'Interesting English', in Daiï *Bhạṣạ Ankṛiṣ an Nàsoncaị*, which was written from my own experience since my 6th Form English classes in New Zealand where I spent 10 months there as an American Field Service cultural exchange student.

My second book is titled, 'Free Translation of English', or in Daiï *Plạekleḍ Ankṛiṣ*. It is about translating between English and Daiï. In it I try to address most important issues that impede translations.

I spare no translating difficulties. Many of the examples I introduce are what people have tried to avoid talking about. Some are thought by many to be impossible to translate.

There you go, '*Sapere aude!*', in Latin a bid to have courage.

There is in Manchester the Coronation Street and the English Heritage is helping its residents keep their cobbled street from being tarmacked over. The soap opera *Coronation Street*, which was begun in 1961, probably has its name taken from this street, because it is made for ITV by Granada which is here in Manchester.

These soap operas are on-going, omnipresent dramas in British TV schedules. Some examples are *Brookside* (began 1982), *East Enders* (began 1985) and *Emmerdale* (began 1972 as *Emmerdale Farm*).

According to the guidance from the government's planning, new developments in the city centre area should never clutter up the external space, setbacks at upper floors should never be overdone, and bars and gates should be used instead of slid shutters.

Active users such as shops and restaurants, arcades, colonnades, entrances, verandas and windows are encouraged on facades.

They say that the Free Trade Hall (1853–56) stands on the hallowed ground of the Peterloo Massacre, and so should be preserved on that ground.

In 1844 Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881) spoke here, in 1862 Gladstone, in 1884 H M Stanley lectured here on 'geographical science', and in 1907 Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874–1965). Charles John Huffam Dickens (1812–1870) was here every year for 20 years until 1868. On 16 May 1966 Bob Dylan performed a concert here.

I like the building looks nice and unique, and they should keep it. The building stands on the Peter Street and Deansgate Conservation Area, and by the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act 1990 it should be preserved and enhanced.

Now they are tearing half of the poor thing down, and it is the half that I like because of its uniqueness as I said, but they will do it anyhow.

They want to build a five-star hotel here. What a pity!

Some cinemas are saved, some are destroyed, yet others become a pub.

The Regal Twin Cinema opposite the BBC on Oxford Road was opened in 1930 and closed in 1986. Since 1992 it has become the Northern Ballet School.

The Forum in Northenden was opened in 1934, turned into the ABC, became a live theatre in 1974 and is now the Jehovah's Witness Hall.

Both the Ambassador (1928) in Salford and the Plaza Cinema in Stockport have become Grade II listed.

The future of the Empress Electric Theatre (1912) in Miles Platting is still uncertain. Its facade is made of red Accrington brick. As it was built in the early days of purpose-built cinemas, it is a surprise it has not been listed before the others mentioned.

The site where the Midland Hotel in Lower Mosley Street is nowadays used to be the Gentlemen's Concert Hall. It was in white and gold, panelled in mahogany, and had a 60 feet high dome. Here Mendelssohn conducted his *Elijah* in 1847, only months before his death. Chopin gave his recitals here in August 1848 when Karl Halle was also in the audience.

The Manchester Airport Pollution Advisory Council tries to reduce the level of nitrogen dioxide in the city, which is not as bad as the pea-souper smog of 50 years ago. Seven main air pollutants have been set apart and standards imposed. They are benzene, 1,3-butadiene, carbon monoxide, fine particles, lead nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide.

Midori says on 28 December that the networks in Grosvenor Street Building has been down since Christmas Eve. She is going to spend New Year in London.

It has been snowing in Manchester; 29 December 2000. The cold front has come down from Scotland and I think it is still here, even though the weather forecast said that there will not be any more snow now.

It snows every time I am in England. When I was here in 1989 it snowed in London in March. It also snowed in 1994/1995 when I was here in Manchester. So I guess that it snows once every five years here. This time they predict one of the coldest winters in the UK.

Saturday 30th December 2000, Yukiko has sent a New Year card and photo from Nepal. The picture looks so nice I wish I had been there with her.

I have not written a single New Year card this year, only a few messages 'Merry Christmas and Happy New Year' via emails. I send one of these to her because Manchester is now covered in snow.

It is white everywhere and you can hardly see the sun. This must be one of the coldest winter we ever have around here. In a town where it could be many years before one see any snow it has been such a surprise.

Seeing icicles hanging here and there when I come to the university I imagine to myself that an ice age is coming and all the earth is going to be covered with snow, or that I had gone back millions of years in time to the time when the world was all covered with ice.

But then again there is this computer I am sitting in front of now. So I still could not quite make up my mind what has happened to the world, but I would not be surprised at all if I saw mammoths in my dreams tonight.

With icicles under the arches under the railways and the world darkened all around, a prehistoric animal towering behind the sculpture of Archimedes getting up from his bath would not have seemed out of place. But I must tread more carefully here as the steps has become all icy and slippery.

It is so quiet around here at this time of the year when everyone has gone home for a visit.

They have been showing James Bond movies on the television recently. Though I have managed to miss most of these, what I did see I really did enjoy.

I think Yukiko should publish the photos she has taken as a book.

I only stay in Manchester during the Christmas and New Year holidays. Most people has gone away to celebrate them with their family. Even my family in Daiï go together to *Auḅ Khạn*, supposedly another spectacular gorge as the name seems to imply.

It is quite quiet around here in Manchester.

My present telephone number, +44–161–933–4517, goes directly first to my room, but then if I am not there transfers the incoming call to the central answering machine. I do not like this much, because to get a message you need to dial to that central machine which takes quite a while to connect before which many a button has to be pressed.

I have recently rearranged my room again, as everyone must have already known by now. I am always happy after I have just reorganised my room.

On the night of 7 January 2001 it snows for the first time in Tokyo. Michiko

wrote back, '*Nana korobi, ya oki*' †, in response of my sending in my writing to her previously, '*Sapere aude!*' ‡ Her eldest son comes of age today.

Failings give us a valuable experience in a sense that they give one the necessity to look at other possibilities.

To succeed in one thing is essentially to fail at other things. I had managed, for instance, to pass exams for my bachelor and master degrees, and therefore in a way have succeeded there. But at the same time I have failed to become an astronomer or an astrophysicist, which is what my childhood dreams really are.

In other words that is the question, 'to be or not to be' as Shakespeare poses in Hamlet. It is similar to the question of choice which some later called Existentialism.

My flat mate Cloe says that that phrase has been translated into Chinese which says, 'to live or to die', which is nonsense I think, because 'to live or to die' means nothing whereas 'to be or not to be' everything. So the translator in this case has succeeded in translating everything into nothing!

Tuesday 16$^{\text{th}}$ January 2001, there is a news that Fulcrum TV wants to recruit students who are fluent in more than one language and are willing to tell their story, to go on a television programme about multilingualism in the UK for the BBC. It is announced by Zoe, the present President of the Student Union.

I write to my supervisor Furuta in Japan congratulating him for his new position at another university, the Tokyo Denki University. It is good after you have retired to still be able to carry on doing the things you like.

I had not kept in touch with him because I had had the access to neither the Unix nor Matlab while in Daiï, and so was not able to write up my PhD thesis for him.

Now that I am back at UMIST, I have recently started to use a Unix again from my new account at the Control Systems Centre here. I ask him whether it is still possible for me to carry on my work for PhD.

'If it is,' I write, 'I would like to do it because it was one of those things I had not managed to complete'.

I ask him whether there is still a copy of my old home directory on the computer or in the backups. I kept track of my work as notes which I kept in my directory. With them I think I would be able to carry on from where I

† You may fall down again the seventh time, but you can get up the eighth time. This idea is represented in the round figure of a Daruma, which never falls.

‡ Have courage!

had left out.

'Sorry that I decided to resign then instead of persevering', I tell him. I want to write up a PhD thesis either for the Tokyo Institute of Technology where I was, or for some other university in Japan.

But he must have understood it some other way, probably that I want to use the things I had done while in Japan to complete my PhD here in the UK. So he replies that all he can suggest is that I should contact three other persons for my files, all of whom turn out to say the same thing, that my home directory is already gone and there are no backups.

It makes me sad to think that I had worked like hell for him until the end of my stay in Japan we have known each other for five years, but he still is capable of thinking that I would use the works that I had done with the funding from the Japanese Government for a degree in another country.

When I have read books on the decipherment of the Minoan scripts, in particular the Mycenean Linear B script by Michael Ventris, I change the name 'technical reports' and 'research records' that I used to call my own works into simply 'work notes' the way he had done. And I give some of these work notes to Mona, when they are related to Language, or to Graham when Geometry.

Sunday 21st January 2001, an email came from Yukiko. Winter in Japan has been becoming milder.

Not long ago she went to Hakuba in Nagano prefecture where the Winter Olympic Games was held three years ago. It is usually covered with a lot of snow at this time of the year but there was no snow then.

The ski resort was closed due to the absence of snow. But the mountains still looked nice.

'Seeing the overwhelmingly beautiful scenery of the place,' she wrote, 'the other side of the world where Gods would come down from the heaven, will certainly move you'.

It must have been all right because she plans to climb the mountains there again. Yes, I could join her, she said, but I need to start doing plenty of exercises now in order to avoid the altitude sickness before I could climb 5000 metres up the mountain.

I am going to start saving some money now. I have no clues how much it would cost, but I will worry myself about that later.

She adds in the postscript that it has become very cold these days. Now it is snowing heavily in Japan too.

'You may be right to say an ice age is coming', she says, then adds that it is snowing outside and Tokyo is in white all over.

Wednesday 31st January, pick up people again for our Day Care. There is a pizza party at the Avila House at 7 pm.

The weather is getting warmer and warmer all the time. You can feel it. This morning I really thought that spring was already here. But it is not yet because we still have frost on the ground early each morning; 6th February.

Sometimes I ask myself why I am here doing what I am doing, and could not answer. I guess it does not matter. There are things that you can neither understand nor reason.

A Wednesday and therefore Day Care, but John is not well so we do without him, 7 February. Everything is all right, but I forgot to get some milk. I ask the catering ladies next door where we normally get hot water for some, and they gave me plenty.

I mention to our ladies that there is a picture exhibition by one UMIST student who has just graduated from the textile department, K.K.K., in the entrance hall on B floor. Everybody seems to be interested and enthusiastic, so we go down the transparent lift just before three o'clock, after our tea and coffee, to have a quick look at the exhibition.

We have a good time together. Mrs Sloan thinks that the entrance hall itself is more beautiful than the pictures.

We talk about art galleries. Mrs Carter also know about the special exhibition at the Whitworth Art Gallery, but she too could not remember what it was.

Then she talked about the Museum of Costumes in Platt Halls on Platt Fields, and I told her that I had been there and have found it interesting myself.

Museums and galleries would be interesting for us to visit. They provide a leisure stroll that suits the nature of our group, as well as something worthwhile for a mind to digest. No one seems to mind going to any one of these places. Apart from this, going to a garden on a fine day could be a nice change.

The two ladies from the Royle court and Mrs Carter are unable to join us this week. We normally meet in the CA office at 12.30 before Rob and another one of us go in a van to pick up our ladies.

We used to have gentlemen coming along too, or so I have heard, but they gradually disappeared from the scene perhaps because we did not go out often or because there was nothing interesting for them to do.

Saturday 17th February, travel to St Albans to stay with Met and Bill. Sunday 18th, they drop me at St Albans Station before they go to Luton.

Then I go to London, walk to the British Museum and then to Travel Inn, Westminster. The Student Volunteering Launch is at the House of Parliament

on Monday morning when there may be a tube strike.

St Alban lived during the third century. He was born at Verulamium, served in the Roman army, converted to Christianity and was beheaded for professing his belief. King Offa founded a monastery in 793 on the site of his martyrdom. His feast day is 20 June.

The British Museum was founded in 1753 and in 1759 opened in London. The present buildings were constructed during 1823–47. The Natural History Museum moved to South Kensington in 1881.

There are two Houses of Parliament, that is the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Originally the former was the more important one, then they crashed, and in the end the latter has become the stronger one. The Act of 1911, the Parliament Bill of 1947 and the Parliament Act of 1949 have all curbed the powers of the upper house.

The word 'Lord' comes from Old English *hlaford* which means a *bread keeper*.

After the Launch at Westminster I do some sightseeing of London by myself. There is an area north of the city with an inviting street on which there are shops selling various different things from clothes to circus juggling clubs.

There is a foot tunnel through which you could cross under the thames from one side to the other on foot. The tunnel connects Greenwich with London, and similarly does the Blackwall Tunnel which is for vehicles.

You go down in a spacious lift which is operated by a staff. The tunnel takes a while to walk because the Thames river is wide here. You may bring your bicycle with you so long as you push it along and not cycle. The crossing is safe owing to the Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras inside both the tunnel and the lifts.

London is a good place to visit, especially when you know before hand what you want to see and do. I went to the British Museum, Camden Market near the Camden Lock and Canary Wharf's millennium sites which I thought was very like a certain part of Tokyo.

I also walked under and across the Thames in a pedestrian tunnel from Greenwich to the Island Gardens.

Two clay tablets written in the Linear B script of the 15^{th} century BC Mycenean Greece was of much interest to me. They belong to those things which provide a link among languages of at least two continents, that is to sayl, Asia and Europe if not also Africa or Egypt. As such, these six-time-two inch burnt clay tablets are no less important than the famous Rosetta Stone, which is also in the British Museum.

In 1965 two metropolitan boroughs, that is Greenwich and Woolwich, joined together into the present day Greenwich and became a London borough.

The Greenwich meridian is the zero line of longitude which passes through the Old Royal Observatory, which was founded by King Charles II in 1675 to give navigational information for sailors.

In 1884 the Greenwich Meridian was adopted as international standards of reference. In 1958 after World War II the Royal Greenwich Observatory moved to Herstmonceux Castle, Sussex, and again in 1990 to Cambridge. With it also moved the Greenwich Mean Time.

It also operates telescopes on La Palma in the Canary Islands, which include the 165-inch William Herschel commissioned in 1987.

Greenwich was designated a World Heritage Site in 1997.

Designed by Richard Rogers Partnership who designed the Lloyd's Buildings, the Millennium Dome has a diameter of 1,050 feet, a height 164 feet, an area 19.86 acres and is constructed on the Greenwich Prime Meridian. It was conceived in 1992, opened on 31 December 1999 and partly funded by the lottery funds through the Millennium Commission.

London Underground is the world's first underground rail line. It was opened in 1863, essentially a roofed trench at first.

There are two John's in our Community Action, one is a student whereas the other a staff, and I do not always distinguish the one from the other for you here.

No, I shall not be the only one to tolerate John's language. So, here you are some of what he wrote to us.

> Two of our vols here attended the launch of the week on Monday at the House Of Commons with MP Paul Boeting - Home Office Minister/Youth. A further 4 vols will also attend the Student Volunteering UK conference this weekend in Liverpool. A couple of vols (Aren't you Rachel and Zoe?!) will blitz the Association today with CA flyers in a bid to attract new vols. Congrats, you guyz, and keep up the good work!!

So there you go, now you understand (why I like (our) CA (this much)).

Sunday 18^{th} February 2001 , Yukiko has written again. It has been surprisingly cold in Japan this winter. They have had several snows in Tokyo.

She went to Hokkaido to ski, and it was -15 degree and there was even a wind!

She plans to go to Nepal again in 2002 to climb up to Mt Kala Pattar (5,545 m) from where you get a close view of Mt Everest. The trip could cost around 400,000 yens. 'But you should go there at all costs', she says.

Monday 26^{th} February 2001, I hope that the new government in Daiï will be able to accomplish what they aim to do during their campaign.

The limit for truck in Europe is, I think, 40 tonnes and in UK about 35. And they are trying to have this limit increased. The roads here are wide and the trucks always go on the leftmost lane.

I think Daiï needs more motorways and the elimination of the *mad pills* or Amphetamines by increasing sentences and better policing.

They say increasing the tonnage of trucks would reduce intercity traffic.

Sunday 18th March 2001, John wrote to say that this week the Day Care project is going to the Museum of Science and Technology. To see the museum now there is still an entrance fee which by next year will have disappeared.

This term postgraduate seminars tend to be heavily scheduled on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Last week was the first time I could make it to two of them over at the University of Manchester.

Some seemingly small things, for example visiting the Manchester Aquatic Centre, could as well be quite enjoyable for Day Care people, and not too demanding.

The Mersey River Valley and all the water parks in that area is also a very nice place for a picnic. The Gorton Reservoir is another one.

Or we could sit and chat at UMIST. There is a cafe in the Reynold Building and another one in the Staff House that could be a change if we want to.

I do not know why John always ask me for suggestions, for he never follows them.

Exchange Square is so completely transformed I cannot remember what it was like before. Now you have a modern open space that invites, refreshes and slows down the pace of your life and thought.

The water from a fountain that runs through the gaps between rocks which lie on the ground to form a strip, half canal, half underground water; seats that are bogies, placed on tracks on the ground; windmill sails.

On Thursday 22nd March I write to Caroline to say that there is absolutely no need to worry. I did not mind not being able to be on SCANC. I agree with her that it needs no treasurer for exactly the same reason she mentioned, that is geographical location. I tell her I consider myself a professional volunteer, so this is no disappointment.

A good thing is that I do not have to be busy. The only reason why I wanted to help was that this year is a Year of Volunteering and I want to devour as much experience as possible.

I may be too busy to help organising next year's conference.

They may find defining its roles easier if they replace the name 'SCANC' with some better one, or change the way people pronounce it.

I fly to on the Malaysian Airline MH11 to Kuala Lumpur and then on

MH784 from there to Ḅaṇgkauk, Sunday 25th March. I can collect the miles travelled on a Malaysian Airline flight into my Flying Dutch mileage card of KLM, though it is by no means the best of such cards. The collected miles seem to disappear into a kind of void from where nothing whatever comes out of. When I was in Japan, I flew to Hawaii on a *gratuit* ticket from mileages collected on a Northwest card. And a large part of those came only from the trip I made to the US in June 1996.

Daiï is a land of Buddhism. To me the latter is no religion but a philosophy, and Buddha a philosopher. His teaching predates that of Plato, who was born over a century after he died.

It is interesting to note that the toga worn by the Greeks and Romans is very similar to clothes worn by a Buddhist monk, except for the colour which for the former is white while for the latter yellow or orange. Moreover the three languages, namely Pali, Greek and Latin, belong to the same Indo-European family, with words in Pali and Ancient Greek very similar to each other.

For me, a prerequisite of a religion is its being originated from myths which subsequently develop into a philosophy. Thus Christianity, Islam and Judaism are religions, whereas the teachings of both Buddha and Confucius, who was eight years old at the time when Buddha died, have always been a philosophy from the start, and for that very reason are philosophies not religions.

It could be because Buddha first taught his findings in India, a country rich of religions among which is Hinduism, that later myths were added in order to turn a philosophy into a religion. I maintain that those later-added myths are faked and unnecessary. The end product being always a philosophy, there is no more need to add them then than there are needs to add yeasts to a baked bread. In the latter case what you want to eat is the bread not the yeast, and similarly in the former the philosophy not the myth.

I say that while the yeasts added to a bread may cause indigestion of the stomach, the myths added to a philosophy may cause indigestion of the brain.

Myself I have always been an adherent to Buddhism as a philosophy. During 1983 when I have come into contact with Christianity in New Zealand, I started to define myself as a non-religion.

Towards the end of 1994 I found God while sitting in my room at the Moberly Hall, reading an English translation of Hugo's *Les Misérables*. From April 2003 I started to pray for people whom I know, and cannot stop doing so ever since.

I try to be a good Christian who believes in Buddha's philosophy, and I believe in his philosophy because I have found God through his teaching.

In May 2001 I went to Italy and a few other countries. On my way back on the plane I take some slides. We were flying so low. They are slides of the

Alps. This is the 19th May 2001 and the plane was British Midland BD472.

I like photography, and I used to win prizes in a country-wide competition for slides. There is some problem when I have the slides developed at the shop inside the Manchester Metropolitan University's Student Union. They must have lost a few of my slides, because some of the shots that I can remember vividly are missing. There are no other proofs of course, except my own memory. For all I know, someone in the lab could have thrown them away by mistake.

Chris, the manager of the shop, promised to find the missing slides for me. But it turns out that he plays the game of postponing. Day after day in good faith I would visit him at his shop to ask about my slides, but all's in vain.

Today I said that I no longer think or expect to have them back after all the hassles of these three weeks. I want to have the receipt back, that which he had taken from me three weeks ago. I keep records of my travelling and would keep the receipt among my other memorabilia.

The more I asks him for it, the more annoyed he seems to become. Then he turns the story around just like that. Now he says that the lab has got it. I tell him I do not think that is the case. It is funny to see how his tone suddenly changes by my merely insisting that I have my receipt back. I tell him that unless he gave the receipt back to me I will complain.

He jeers and mocks my words, saying there is no use complaining. 'That receipt belongs by right to the shop,' he says.

'I paid the money,' say I, 'and so I keep the receipt'. I think to myself, 'What ridiculous chap! Even a child knows this much'.

It turns out that Chris believes in no customer's rights.

I look around for a policeman, and seeing none I shout, 'Police!, Police!' It must have been a sight. A man taller than myself joins us, and join force in pushing me out of the shop.

'Take your hands off me!', I demand, but I must have not sounded convincing enough for they still keep on pushing at me.

Up to this point, I have unintentionally upset some stationeries from the shelves, and I think I had better leave now lest it escalates into upsetting their persons, which might land me in trouble and does not become a good Christian like me.

And I called, 'Police!, Police!,'
but no police was around.
I called, 'Police!, Police!,'
but the police was nowhere to be found.

I complain later to Miss Essex who is the President of the MMU's SU, and finally receive a free film with development included.

The free film I take some unimportant pictures in no time, hand it over to them, then keep my fingers crossed waiting and fearing for the worst. This time nothing goes amiss, they have learnt their lessons and I have mine.

But a free film is really nothing compared with two of my favourites slides.

Today as I handed in the complaint form the lady at the reception desk, who is otherwise very kind, said to me as she was handing a photocopy of the form to me that she had made a white copy for me and she was going to keep the coloured one for herself, she hoped that I would like the white one. Now, I have no clues why she said that.

Vaen just said that in this case at least coloured is Christian whereas whites are godless.

Also, I have been a professional volunteer in UK since 1994, not that I am paid for doing what I did. I have been a carer who looked after elderly people and think that I had come to know the good and kind side of the British culture some of the younger generation nowadays might have overlooked.

I do not believe in suing. In fact I do not even believe in complaining.

But if someone has accused you of something without your knowing it, for example if Chris should have informed the police that I had been wreaking a havoc around out of the blue, then I want to know in order that I can then defend my own name.

It is not that I would mind being misunderstood that much. But even though it is certainly best to forgive any people whoever, sometimes you need to be able to stand up and say something for yourself if you would rather not be bullied and then shut up.

I want to know what is going on. Such cowardice.

> What man is this who bullies another man?
> He is no man who another man bullies.

The Criminal Investigation Department is the detective branch of the London Metropolitan Police. It was established in 1878. Recruitment is entirely from the uniformed police. In London, a number of detectives are stationed at New Scotland Yard.

Sherlock Holmes is fictitious and a private detective.

Detectives normally busy themselves investigating a murder. Not all detectives turn out to be a discoverer, but they call them *detectives* anyway instead of *investigators*.

His narrator is Dr Watson, though both of them are narrated by Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) who was Scottish, but whose works are set in Cornwall.

Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie (née Miller, 1890–1976) also write detective novels. In fact she was such a prolific writer she must have averaged 20 pages a day or something. She created Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple. I like her stories, especially the Poirot's ones, but I prefer Holmes. She also wrote under the name Mary Westmacott some romantic novels.

It may be interesting to note that the Leaning Tower of Pisa is famous not so much for the fact that it leans, but because it tried to correct itself. Or rather, the builders of subsequent periods tried to build the upper floors level while the base of the building was already tilting. Therefore it gives the impression of someone who loses his balance and is about to fall down into a pond, say, but is trying hard to recover his balance and remain on land.

Sunday 10th June 2001, yes! summer is here now. But sometimes it is still cold.

Today, for example, it is sunny but yesterday it was windy and cool. Now the night time has shrunk to such an extend that we only have the darkness each day from 10 pm to 4 am the following day. One step further and we would have a midnight sun like they do in Norway!

My brother emailed to say that the new government seems to be very good and efficient. The only obvious thing the present prime minister of Daiï has in common with myself is that we both have studied all our school years at Montfort College in Jiangmhăị.

His name, *Dakṣiṇ*, is in some transliteration confused with the name *Ṭaksin* of the general who revived Sïam after its capital city *Ȧyudhyạ* was sacked the second time by the Burmese. Both are crucial for their country in crisis.

I am glad to hear my brother say that the saving interest of the banks is going to be increased. But this will prove not to be the case. Not much is happening around here since this is the summer holiday. Everyone seems to have left and gone home yesterday.

The town has become much more quiet than it usually is. This is truly a university town, after all.

Donna is the first one of my friends at Ashburton College whom I try to get in touch with again. I wrote her a postcard the last time I flew to England, and she answered by email and ask me a typical Kiwi question what I have been up to.

I tell her it has been twenty years since the last time I saw her. Briefly speaking I returned from Ashburton College to Montfort College, my secondary school in Daiï. That was unwise of me, because with my Sixth Form Certificate I could have gone to the Jiangmhăị University to do Astronomy.

The following year I was offered a place at an engineering faculty, but I decided that I wanted to do medicine.

I illegally took the university entrance exam again when I got caught and have all my offers annulled.

But that was all right, since I love tragedy.

I went to Ḅạngkauk to do Computer Science at the Open University there.

From the year that followed onwards I studied at two universities at the same time, namely the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University and the Rạmgaṃhạeng University, by the end of the period of five more years of which I have obtained two bachelors of engineering, one in Electrical and the other Mining Engineering, and another bachelor degree in Computer Science.

During my study I went once to the UK and again to Budapest for a job training.

After I have graduated, I worked for three years at three different companies, and had become a workaholic.

Extremes are not sustainable, however, and that was what happened with me and my attitude towards my career. I left my third job when the Daiï economy was at its strongest ever in history, to do a master degree in Manchester, England.

Then I went to Japan and did research there for three and a half years.

When I returned to Daiï in 1999, that country's economy was at its lowest ebb ever. The worst thing which I soon came to realise is that the morale amongst the professional population was even worse. They say that lacks of courage are contagious, so now I am back in Manchester again for more postgraduate studies.

Benito is our hall of residence's tutor. I write to him complaining the wrongs I have experienced from Grosvenor Place in January.

After I arrived here in September, I was paying the rent by Direct Debit. For the first few months no money had been taken from my account. Then I received a letter telling me to come to the office to write a cheque because the direct debit was not working.

Shortly after I have given them the cheque, the money was withdrawn from my account twice. I was put into overdrawn for months and did not realise it until someone told me there seemed to be some problem in my bank statement.

When I started to complain about this, the hall of residence's staffs made me run backward and forward between GP and NatWest, always saying to me the person concerned in this matter was not there. This was a hassle to me, and had wasted much of my time. I had to spend more than the whole

week doing that.

Then I gave them a letter from the bank which says how much the mistake had caused me in terms of the interests, and told them that the bank had said that there may be some more charges not yet written in that report. The staff said, 'Fine', they would make the reimbursement a little higher than the amount written, then, in order to make sure that it covers everything. But what they did turned out to be contrary to their promising words, and I found that I had to bear the additional charges myself.

'They are just a bunch of ignorami,' I should have told our tutor, 'The only thing they care about while working in the morning is where they are going to have the lunch, and the only thing in the afternoon is when they can finally go home'.

This is why my flat mate Aziz, for instance, came here loving all breathing creatures, only to go away defeated and thinking that the varsity was racist.

End of June 2001, my sister wrote to say that she had been to a conference in Portuguese, and then again in Chicago American. How lucky! In the former buildings are historical, whereas in the latter they are modern, or so she said.

I could have guessed as much myself. But it seems to me that I shall have to visit the Art Museum in Chicago some time.

She says she is going to open a clinic next month.

All students who come to study in Manchester are at best guaranteed that during their first year here they will have somewhere to live in. So they come here in great number, only to find out that sometimes even this ridiculously generous gesture is forsaken.

It is not only the tuition fees but also the rents that rises every year at a hyperbolic rate, one cannot help but thinks that those people who, through their calculation somehow arrived at these exaggerated amounts, are from some non-Euclidean space, out of phase with the world we live in.

By July 2001 I have already joined all my other flat mates in the attempt of finding the favour from some other landlords apart from the universities' Accommodation Office. And this almost invariably means getting from a boiling pot into a frying pan.

I ask Hayley at Jardine for a room at the new Sir Charles Grove Hall of Residence. I ask for a room some floors up, with the window opening towards the east. It will turn out that my room there does have a window, but one which opens towards the south.

But by the time I know about this I will have already realised that this is even better, because in the northern hemisphere of this high an latitude the sun only moves about within the bound of the southern half of the sky. So

a room whose windows open to the south enjoys the sunlight all day long, whereas rooms in the northern part of the building are forever either cool or damp.

Recently I have had a small problem with my Hotmail address, that is to say, I could not log in to my account. I would like to think that some hackers had been trying to gain the access of it. So I make myself another address, also in Hotmail, and from this new address report the problem to the staffs there.

Ken is fine and kicking in Bristol. Not that I have seen him, but he has replied my email. No one could have sounded the way he did.

I have a feeling that newspapers in the UK is getting less and less interesting to read. But not long ago I read that in Florida there was an uncle who wrestled with a shark his size and rescued his nephew's arm from it's gut!

I wonder if you can swim in the sea in Bristol.

In our busy physical world we tend to put off relationships with our virtual friends. Though I know Ken as a person, I can talk with him now only in the virtual reality of the Internet.

Cyberspace is the most obvious example of our extended worlds. It is unique in a way because while the telephone and the television, for instance, has no higher a dimension than the dimension of the networks it is built on, the opposite is true for the Internet. That is to say, its dimension is higher, usually much higher than its infrastructure, that is to say, the telecommunication networks on which it sits. By *dimension* I mean the dimension of the simplest of the different possible representations.

This is by no means difficult to see, considering that on one hand the television and the telephone are both hardwares whereas on the other hand the Internet is essentially a software, or rather the space created by the software as such.

Ken has sent a questionnaire, Monday 13th August, intended for people to get to know each other better. The following are the questions followed by the answers he gives.

Living arrangement– House share; book you are reading now–Bible; the thing on your mouse pad–A mouse!!!; favourite board game–Chess; favourite magazine–Edge (gamers mag); favourite smells–Most women's perfume, (not too much though); least favourite smells–poo, burnt food; favourite sound–breakbeats; worst feeling–Hurting someone I love; the first thing you think of when waking up in the morning–I need more sleep; favourite colour–Black [of course]; number of rings before you answer the phone–one (if I am close); name of future child–Brandy (girl), markus (boy); most important thing in life–Religion; favourite foods–Fish, chicken; between chocolate and vanilla–Vanilla; whether you like to drive fast–Of course (I'm a bloke); whether you

sleep with a stuffed animal–hell no; whether storms are cool or scary–Both; type of your first car–Mazda 323 GT (da bomb!); ultimate car–Ferrari 360; whom you would meet dead or alive–Jesus; favourite alcoholic drink–Don't drink; your zodiac sign–Virgo; whether you eat the stems of broccoli–Yuk!; what job you would rather have–F1 driver; whether you have ever been in love–Yes; whether the glass is half empty or half full–Half full; favourite movie–The good, the bad and the ugly; whether you type with your fingers on the right keys–No; the thing under your bed–Dirt; favourite number–9; favourite sport to watch–Football.

Approximately a week later I send him my answers, which are the following. The answer for all the questions omitted is 'Not applicable'.

Living arrangement–don't know, will have to move soon; book I am reading now–Shakespeare; the thing on my mouse pad–a mouse is on one of them; favourite smells–food; hated smells–most perfumes; worst feeling–sick; the first thing that comes into my head in the morning–where am I; favourite colour–most colours; most important thing–don't know; favourite foods–most foods; between c and v–chocolate; to drive fast–no; sleep with stuffed animal–no, if I could avoid it; whether storms are cool or scary–wonderful; who would you meet alive or dead–none, except God only if I could do so alive; alcoholic drink–table wine; my zodiac sign–scorpio; eat the stems of broccoli–yes; job you would rather have–a professed billionaire without any debt and worries; ever been in love–sadly, yes; empty or full–half empty; type with my fingers on the right keys–half of the time; under my bed–air and carpet; favourite number–odd.

I am no longer using the phone, so the number of rings before I answer one is irrelevant. I should have said that my favourite number is a prime number. Seldom do I answer questionnaires, I tend to think of them as lacking of rooms for the imagination.

I have been busying myself with the translation of papers by Voronoi and Dirichlet into English from the originals in French and respectively German.

I write to *Śrindibja* at the Chulalongkorn University Press about the book and to the National Library in Daiï to ask for an ISBN number, but neither reply.

It is going to be an introduction to Voronoi tessellation and a translation of three original and influential papers on the topic by Georges F Voronoi (1868-1908). The papers were published in 1908 and 1909 in the Journal für die reiner und angewandte Mathematik.

Voronoi tessellation has found numerous applications, ranging from modelling biological tissues to modelling the structure of galaxy clusters. I intend to make it a book for anyone who is interested in geometry as well as for researchers, both academic and industrial.

I must be a very disorganised person for hardly do I ever get anything done.

There is no use trying to plan to improve. The only way possible is to do it.

I feel that summer is already gone. We have some rain and fluctuation in temperature. Then one day it becomes sunny again.

A friend of mine who came from Germany believes it is still mid summer, and complains because it is raining which he thought unbelievable, and I shall not argue. He has a very likeable character, must be because he has lived in New Zealand, which is already rare here in Manchester.

The city has been growing so fast during the previous years it must be difficult to keep everything in order. This is another side of the coin about growth.

I have been reading books on mathematical puzzles and astronomy both subjects of which I really enjoy.

The newspapers here can make themselves inviting when they have a mind to. There are always repeated themes, namely those that sell and, worse than this, those that keep on repeating those that sell. Some of these themes are sex scandals or murder or both, fashion, travel and reviews of books and films.

Someone complains why there are no articles reviewing philosophical ideas.

Now I no longer enjoy reading the way I used to do. I can remember reading every word of the translated Hugo's *Les Miserables* and Gaarder's *Sophie's World.* I wish there will be time when I could delve into Literature and Astronomy and Philosophy.

When we are busy and happy, time passes by so quickly that we have trouble remembering when things happened.

Charlie writes on 26$^{\text{th}}$ August. He is as usual busy tracing and keeping in touch with all his and Jeanette's relatives, which now have come to include cousins of their parents. They plan to have a family reunion in two years time, and have issued a family newsletter.

Both have recently had *the cold with the 100 day cough.* Both he and Jeanette went to the same primary school. Jeanette's parents shifted from the neighbouring district to their new farm at Isla Bank in 1951. One of his teachers taught Charlie during 1946–1950 and Jeanette during 1951 and 1952. He loves music and poetry. It is through his insistence that all his students use descriptive English that Charlie now likes to write.

'There is no places for excellence in marks,' he used to say, 'for there are always scopes to improve'.

He is now 88, his wife 82 and his sister has recently passed away who was 90.

Spring has finally come in New Zealand. The light now comes at about 6 am and darkness 6.30 pm.

Their Bed and Breakfast business is going steadily. It is time for Charlie to plant thousands of plants again.

There is a lifetime to spare for what you love doing. I can be very stubborn at times, and I am not going to give up my studying this time.

There is nothing like Manchester. When I was doing my M.Sc. here in 1995 I thought there was nowhere as sombre as the town. But now we have traffic jams of up to a mile long all over the place. This is also literally a very gay city, this is now 29 August 2001.

The Gay Village here has a Madigras every year, and this year it was on Saturday. On Monday there was a huge Good Year advertising balloon circling the sky and we had a perfect weather. I stood and watched the balloon and marvelled at the technology of mankind when it was a Late Summer Holiday in the UK.

I knew then only that this was a holiday. Then I asked Dmitris, one of my flat mates who comes from Greece and he said that Napolean was killed by a British on that day. I believed him at that time, but afterwards realised that Napolean died in prison, poisoned until he was very sick. I tend to believe people too easily, but have now come to my own conclusion that the Late Summer Holiday is the last Monday of August. Newspapers here can be very educating. It was only last week that I came to notice the difference between the meaning of the words *deprived* and *depraved*.

I normally read the whole article first and then, if it is interesting, do some research later so as to understand it better. There is no need to agree with the author first to be able to appreciate his writing.

Oftentimes I help people without intending to, while equally often intending to but could do nothing that helps. Yet another flat mate of mine who comes from Pakistan left his M.Sc. study suddenly in May, broken within.

It is difficult to find out what has actually happened from the account given by someone so disturbed as he was then, but I could gather from his side of story that he felt he was being prejudiced at.

As I knew he was a gentle person, in my letter written to one of the tutoring staffs to complain about some other things I alluded to his unexplainable departure.

Two weeks ago I met him back again at the hall of residence. He told me that his tutor wrote and asked him to come back to finish his study. He asked me whether I had written to his tutor because it was mentioned that I had. But I said 'No' without waiting for another word.

Sometimes you know when someone is more good intentions than prudence. I would rather not know what, if anything, has happened behind the scene. I hope that with this experience he will be able to guard himself from another such bout of depression.

In short, his was as a remarkable as unexpected a story. Among those in our flat who seem to care are Javier from Spain, Dmitris from Greek and Dirk from Germany and myself. None of our Chinese flat mates did.

If you ever wondered about the plenitude of people in our flat. Bill told me that the law in Britain only allows flats to share one cooker among at most four persons.

Ours has fourteen members but only one cooker. Myself, I would count the four hobs and an oven together as one cooker. But I guess one could perhaps argue that in our case we have five cookers altogether. Only then would it not be against the law in our flat.

When the World Trade Center buildings in New York came down, I was busy in Ḅạngkauk publishing the book *Voronoi translated.* After I have come back to Manchester, Ken writes one day to say that on the Microsoft Words you may want to try typing in 'Q33 NY', the flight number of one of the aeroplanes that crashed into the building. Then if you change the font size to 26 and then change the font to Wingdings, you will see the foreboding message. If this were no coincidence, then whoever had planned the bombs is an expert in Microsoft products and fonts.

The Royal Northern College of Music is offering scholarships to students of my university to study music with their teachers. I apply, but nothing comes of it.

I had learnt the recorder and the trumpet with Antonio, the piano with *Gịrịḅụn*, Chan and his mother, the violin with Mr Slade and the music theory with Chan and then Vicki.

In the early 1980s in the piano exams by the Trinity College of Music I passed Grade IV with honour and then Grade V, and I also satisfied for Music all the requirements for the School Certificate and the University Entrance Accreditation in New Zealand.

I played the trumpet in the brass band at Montfort College and the violin in the school orchestra at Ashburton College, and I sang tenor for both the Bangkok Music Society and the Bangkok Choral Society.

I want to become a concert pianist and to learn everything related to the piano. But my qualifications above are not enough, for example they seem to require that you passed at least Grade VIII for your instrument from the Trinity College. These exams are expensive and you probably have to be trained by a coach to pass them.

I can read the piano with ease but could hardly memorise, that is the trouble with me. I read at the piano as reading a book, not as doing a recitation. This is an age of performers and recitals, not one of readings at sight and composers. I really hunger for knowledge and even want to compose.

But anyway none of these requires an attachment with the RNCM, so at

least I can do it on my own now.

I have been thinking about having some dried foods sent over from Daiï to sell to Daiï shops here. But the cost is horrendously expensive if you do it through the post office, so the idea needs to be dropped for the moment. It is also difficult to find a partner in Daiï to help you do the job.

Charlie has written again. He can write so vivid a description of things.

With the coming of spring we realise just how powerful are the forces or the God that controls the universe.

The terrorist attacks in Manhattan remind us that men are still barbarous, and our savage experiences like those of the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6^{th} and respectively 9^{th} August 1945, have taught only some but have set an example for others and the maniacs.

Most rich people have an obsession with money, but to Charlie friends are more precious than gold or gems.

'It is so important to have work that you are happy doing', he concludes.

One Saturday Mokoto and Kumiko come to visit me at Sir Charles Grove. I meet them at noon at the gate of Grosvenor Place. We have a quick lunch together when I put some cheese on toasts in the oven.

Then we go out for a walk. We follow the Oxford Road, then I lead the way off to the left. But when I turn right to enter a path under the trestle, both of them hesitate, uncertain what to do but finally follow.

The path leads from the street to the Rochdale Canal. The walk along the canal to Castle Field is pleasant. It is no longer dangerous to walk here nowadays.

In Castle Field a large framework is set up and fenced off on which people play the snow-board on artificial snow. There is a slope that leads very high up to a point that looks eerie and fearsome.

Tickets are sold and the area is heavily fenced off, so that you could see nothing much from the outside.

We walk around the place, stopping at the Roman remains site, the Tourist Information Centre and then the Youth Hostel where we stay for a while. Mokoto is going to Spain during the Christmas holidays and wants to find out about the accommodation.

In the evening we walk along the streets back to my place. We all enjoyed our walk. Both Kumiko and Mokoto have been in Manchester a year, and yet most of the places we have been today are new to them.

Back at home both cook me a superb dinner, and we sit down together and talk for a long time. Both of them study Linguistics at the University of Manchester, and Kumiko learns German.

Also studying at the University of Manchester is *Ùm* who also works for two hours everyday at Kim, a grocery owned by a Daiï lady in the Chinatown. She has some problems with her supervisor and wants to move to the Huddersfield University or some other.

Yukari had introduced me to the *Howard's End* by E. M. Foster, and I read it. I introduced it to Kumiko, and she has recently bought a collection of Foster's short stories from a second-hand book market.

The news of a possible attack to the Golden Gate Bridge seems to me a hoax. So soon after the tragic event in Manhattan it would be imbecile of anybody to plan such a thing, let alone to announce it all over the place like this.

I agree with Charlie when he says that the essence of terrorism is its fearsome and unpredictable nature. But strategically speaking, it has always been the US who needs to attack the Middle East as quick as possible in order to command the oil price, an essential thing if it wants to keep all its fifty States together and to maintain its influence on the world.

He may think USA is less popular the further east you go, but I feel that the worst, or the best for that matter, of their critics are Europeans. And you had better heed them even if you do not believe them, because they have at least culture what the people in the US lack.

I often wonder why the US are so different from the EU, considering that both speak very similar languages.

The profundity of the people is influenced much by the cultural heritage of its *environs*. The only heritage which matters for USA is the Wild West, and plenty of gold in the rivers did little helps in bringing up the countries as children. Their acronyms say all, that is the closed former *us* and the fraternal latter *you*.

USA is plural, UK and EU are both singular.

It is strange but true, if one argue by the logic of the Anti Trust Law then the Federal Government of the US should never exist.

You learn all about a country and its culture better when you live there. But the nature of its people is best shown when people from that country either are abroad as a tourist or live overseas, and the smaller the group the better. Thus you see how Japanese people can be polite, eccentric and honest at the same time, or how the Americans have the demanding ways and superior attitude.

Conventional education plays some role in shaping our thoughts and opinions, but it is education in a much wide sense, that lifetime education some call experience, which decides who we are. Education is best when it provides all the many different philosophies as materials, equips you with the analytical and mathematical tools, and then lets you explore and reason.

Federalism is no nationalism, it is more like a brain-wash.

Charlie has many American friends, but even he could not help wondering if all wars are about money and oil. 'They all seem to centre around those places where oil is found,' he says. Indiscriminate terrorism is scary.

It is more difficult to defend oneself than to attack someone. The best defensive move is always an attack or a counter-attack. This is perhaps why the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour.

A *kamikaze* veteran gave his view to a newspaper that it is only those people who had never been in a war, who criticise the suicide-bombings. Well, then I pray to God I that I never find myself in a war.

Terrorism is a vicious cycle. It leads nowhere, and because of this it escalates. God granted, the Iran Curtain, for instance, may not replace the Iron Curtain.

The gardens that Charlie have been doing are beautiful this year. There has been only a little rain and no wind.

With no storms, the tulips flowered for three or four weeks this year. The cherry blossom trees have been in flower for more than eight weeks, and the magnolias are magnificent.

They are renovating their home.

Southland and Invercargill is booming. There are jobs available everywhere, and the publicity campaign there has gone country wide with considerable success. Farm land prices have escalated.

It is easier to go for a walk on your own than to try to do it together with your girl-friend. For one thing there is no need to wait for her to have time for you, for another only then can you be totally relaxed and able to reflect.

A woman is homely, so she never enjoys the different surroundings as much as she does the various people around her. And she is worldly, so she probably would never understand staring into an empty space even when you may feel yourself one with God and Universe.

Kumiko said she is busy, so I walk to the Farmers' Market one Saturday. There are farmers from the countryside who come here to sell their products, which include cheese, preserved foods and meat. It is but a small market with some ten different stalls.

I have applied for a post doing a postdoctoral research at the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the Jodrell Bank Observatory, where I will be studying Active Galaxies if successful. But no replies come back, and after a while I know that my application is again binned.

As New Zealand is heading out of a winter we are heading into one. So far we have had only one or two bouts of very cold days. We have had a very

blue sky today, but towards evening it got quite cold.

Today I went to two concerts, both were by students who are professionals, and both were free.

The first one was a Lunch Time concert at my university UMIST where students from the Royal Northern College of Music sometimes pay us a visit playing.

Today's programme was a piano and cello duet by Brahm, Op. 99, and for the encore we had an incidental piece by a 20th century Italian composer whose name which I had written down is not very familiar to me.

The pianist, who was from Korea, were fine but keep rotating his body while playing too much, which is not the first thing to do when playing accompaniment. The cellist was of darker complexion and rose to the occasion once properly warmed up, that is by the third movement or so.

To sum up, the concert was enjoyable though one does not learn much watching it.

The second concert was all organ musics. Altogether five organists played, among whom the second one was the best in that he brought out from a polyphony in all its complexity, its fundamental simplistic nature. And this, he was able to bare out before the audiences almost the way Beethoven does. The many lines become as many voices independent from, and talking to one another. The technical ability of all the five organists must be pretty much the same, but I only learnt something from the one I mentioned.

Gaby writes on Tuesday 23rd October 2001 to say that Dublin is great. She says that even though it is very crowded with cars and people, there are lovely little corners. 'And the dubliners are really friendly!', she adds. I had written to her a few days ago when I told her that I plan to visit Ireland and Scotland sometimes towards the end of next year.

She thinks that the west coast of Ireland should be nice to visit because it is always recommended to her. She is currently working on a parallel corpus, and use it to do some stylistic studies.

Americans were like gods to a Daiï before we started to have bad experiences with them. Before I went to New Zealand, that is, I used to have the same idea. American's defeat in Vietnam was seen as being tragic and sad. All Vietnamese has been portrayed to us as being a close equivalent to evils.

The closest you can get to an English language school in Jiangmhāị in 1982 was the American University Alumni. American language was taken for granted as being the English language.

Sixth Form English changed all that. It was the first time that I have heard someone criticise *American involvements*. At first I wondered why the world of literature should question Americans, something you never did in Daiï,

when all it ever tried to do was eliminating evils.

'Of course,' I thought, 'you kill bad people, all of them if possible. My Sixth Form English teacher may seem to be wise, but he doesn't know the truth who has never lived next door to evils before'.

But then again, most of the other things he told me were true. So in the end I was forced to have another think about it to see who could possibly go wrong in his analysis. I came to the conclusion that it was either I or the rest of my class the notation of whom must be wrong.

Now I see it as American Imperialism. By this I mean the forcing of one's values upon other people as contrasted with giving education to them so that they may learn to think for themselves.

This latter all good teachers do, even or if it means that their students may refute their ideas.

I am all for 'Long Live the Media', but I think at times it shapes our ideas too much in a wrong way.

The portrait of America is all President Bush's angry name-callings and braggings. Here I have used the word in the American sense, for I have been told by someone from the office of international trading from Pittsburgh to whom I once listen at a conference, that 'to brag' in American English is considered normal and polite.

'There you go !,' I thought at the time, 'How much of the misunderstanding in this world could have been from nothing other than the difference in the languages'. This is especially true for the two languages which look deceivingly similar otherwise, as examples consider Portuguese and Spanish, American and English.

The media is biased and shows only the angry side of the US, seldom those peaceful anti-war demonstrations there.

On the other hand a demonstration of a few Pakistanis obtained a satellite priority, but those ones with banners 'We support jihad against illiteracy' would probably never be broadcasted anywhere. Terrorists have to be busted but not bombed.

Terrorism has no head as such. The worst threat of terrorists is for moderate Muslims. Muslim fundamentalism also follows certain philosophers in a similar way that communism believes in Karl Marx. They also have disciples as communism has Stalin, Lenin and Mao. The immediate threat, however, is always to those closer at home.

Fundamentalists believe it is their duty to purify the Muslim faith, and their target is therefore those whom they call *degenerate Muslims*. Not all terrorists are fundamentalists. Some only respond to Israel's attacks and try in vain at parring the score.

Immediate self-defence as a reflex action is like naturally occurred events or accidents. It is relevant to no moral standards, because it comes from the sub-conscious mind. But a planned-out murder is another thing, and is a misuse of the word *self-defence.*

The first thing terrorists want to see is an overt military action, as England must have known well from experience.

Why America will not support the peace process in Israel, which seems to be a good thing to do, is beyond me. They could also easily help improve the education of the Afghans. After all they had been useful earlier when Red Russia was still in power against whom the US had to have someone to fight for them.

However bombing a country to catch a person may seem obviously preposterous to a child, that is exactly what they would like to have us believe we are trying to do. Prague and Dresden could have done without it. Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki should have been two of the worst of war crime cases in which those who made the decision should have been put on trial.

I speak not to disprove this lack of trials, because life is never fair.

In Daiï both of my parents remember bombings vividly through the eyes of a child. The fact that one bomb might hit a target hardly justify the other 99 which must necessarily drop on the wrong places. Unlike trying to hit a missile by another missile in the Star War test, these are no tests.

My new hall of residence has made so many mistakes. They had made another one again. The kitchen table is fixed to the wall and runs along the whole length of it. But it was built three inches too low, so the fridge and the freezer could not fit in underneath it. Yesterday they had cut the table in half and raised one of the halves up to accommodate these.

Saturday 1st December 2001, there is an International Seasonal Celebration at the RNCM. It is a nice concert and at the end there are minced pies and mulled wine. There are some fifty singers and a number of musicians. Poetries and extracts from a novel by Charles Dickens are read.

One first year student from Macedonia reads a poem in Macedonian alternately with the translation in English read by another person. A student from Ireland sang a sad song in Irish the piano accompaniment. Another student sang a song in what I think is one of the languages of the former Eastern European countries.

A first year student from China played a 2,000 year old Wu Zhen. It is a kind of table harp with a nice sound that reminds me of something I had read in the translated Taiwanese novels some twenty years ago when I was a child.

I hope these musicians are taught western musics while they are here, instead of only performing what they have brought with them and being looked at as mere curiosities. I hope professional musicians know better than I do.

Monday 3rd December, Charlie writes. Next year he will be qualified for pension. He complains about the commercialism associated with Christmas and about the deprivation of the world.

The world is full of covetings and killings, while everywhere people say that they are Christians, Muslims, or some other religions none of which promotes these.

In New Zealand the climate is now becoming more temperate. Formerly warm areas are now prone to drought, and there are more rains in Auckland now than in the Southland.

The petunias, begonias and pansies that are among over 7,500 plants he has planted are now in flower. People he knows start to die off one after another.

'Life is definitely in two parts,' he says, 'the physical and the spiritual'.

Friday 18th January 2002, an email from Charlie.

Christmas has always been linked with giving since the three wise men came to visit the infant Jesus with gifts. People now commercialise this to an indecent degree. We search for profits from everything.

He is worrying about the economics well-being of both the US and Japan, and the effect of these on the world's economics. But I believe that neither of them could be in a recession for long because, with their distributed governments, the structure of both are too robust for that.

One may represent a country as a network. Then the network's structure is more important than its transient indicators.

I risk being thought of as blaming the victim in place of the culprit when I say that the Daiï economy came down in 1997 not because of the attack on the Daiï *ḅạd* by George Soros, a Hungarian-American and owner of a powerful hedge fund in the US, but it came down because Daiï was structurally weak and had too many unnoticed or hidden problems.

Thus the Daiï economy came down *when* Soros's hedge fund attacked us, but it came down *because* of our own structural weaknesses.

The same thing would have to happen anyway, around the same time as it did. According to the percolation theory, when a network is ripe, ready to undergo a change in phase, there are always several possible triggering events any one of which may do the job equally well.

In other words if it were not for the hedge fund, it would have been something else, *but*, and this is important, *the timing will not be far off.*

I work as a Library Representative of the Joule Library at UMIST, so my email address is on the mailing list to answer all students' suggestions.

In January Jenny writes to report that she could not find one past examination paper on the Library's website.

And then Richard writes to complain that we do not support good web browsers, only the Microsoft Internet Explorer which is no good. He suggests that we add to the existing MS products the new Netscape 6.2 and Opera 6.0.

Around five years ago most people used Netscape 4.6, until MS started to force people to use their product, he says.

Dirk comes to visit this evening. We sit in the kitchen drinking some coffee. I introduce him to Aspasia and they exchange addresses. He wants to learn Greek because he has a Greek girl-friend, and she knows where to find a good teacher.

I went swimming again today. I planned my time such that I would be swimming until it was time for everyone to get out of the water for half an hour. So that while swimming I would not have to look around for a clock the time of which I would not have been able to read anyway.

Hovering high on one side of the pool is an electronic billboard facing the spectator stand on the opposite side. Everything including this and the whole swimming pool is indoor. On the ground floor there is a 50-metre swimming pool, a diving pool with its 10-metre diving platform, and sliding tubes.

Winter is practically gone. In a few days' time it will be Candlemas, and it would be interesting to see how the winter here will be like next year.

It is generally believed that if the weather is fine on that day, that is 2$^{\text{nd}}$ February, then winter will come again, otherwise it will disappear and there will be no winter next year.

It is no longer cold now. The winter this year has been very warm, too warm that sometimes it was like a summer. Homeless people do not suffer as much as they did last year, and that is a good thing for them.

February is a nice time. Tomorrow it is Candlemas, 14$^{\text{th}}$ Valentine, and the Chinese New Year is sometime after that, though I do not know when.

Life is too short.

The last time I went back from New Zealand to Japan I stopped at Cairns and unintentionally tried the diving.

The first time I dive we met a big reef shark at close range and I said to myself that I would never again dive, but the following day found me did it again. The Australian marketing was that good!

I think I will never again do that kind of thing.

My time in Daiï was at times almost unbearable, but it could have been worse. It had been a good experience all the same. I should have learnt something from it, though I have yet to find out what that something is.

The street of Manchester is much safer now than what it was five years ago,

thanks to the installation of all the CCTV cameras and the injection of funds to the city by the present Labour government. Historically speaking, this had been the heart of the Labour Movement and the Industrial Revolution.

Some of the websites I have suggested to friends overseas are

`www.britishcouncil.org.uk`, `www.iasuk.org`, `www.jcwl.org.uk`, `www.dfee.gov.uk/ols`, `www.ukcosa.org.uk`, `www.embassyweb.com`,`prospects.ac.uk`, `www.manchester.com`, `www.manchesteronline.co.uk`, `www.commonwealthgames.com/`, `www.umist.ac.uk` and of course `manchesteraquaticscentre.com`.

The BBC seems like a great company to work for. Their team seems to have only young people. It is amazing to see how efficient these people of the generation younger than us work, and to think how through their works they could influence the world.

Their training programme for new employees seems sound. It teaches people to be objective and unbiased.

BBC was founded in 1922 as the British Broadcasting Company, and became Corporation in 1927.

There are very few scholarships here which are available for overseas students. Most of them would require either a UK or an EU citizenship. And the fees for these students are decidedly expensive.

Firstly, in order to get into a university you need to apply and then be offered a place at the university. Ideally you should carefully read and then try to satisfy all the requirement criteria of the course you are applying for and of the university you are applying to. In practice, however, this may not be the case. Sometimes it is all right even if you only satisfy some of these requirements.

Tuition fee in the UK is quite expensive for a European standard. Even local students complain and protest. For overseas students, Daiï and all the Commonwealth countries included, it is approximately three times higher than what the local students have to pay, which makes it about £9,000 a year. The cost of accommodation is a little more than one third of that amount, that is about £3,300 a year.

Your Student Visa is for the first arrival trip only. Once landed, you get another stamp on your passport which you use for the rest of your stay. It entitles you to unlimited number of entries.

This improved procedure benefits students from Daiï, as compared to the one in use in 1994.

Style and hospitality varies from one town to another. Generally speaking, most of the so-called 'university towns', for example Cambridge, Oxford, Manchester, and London, are nice place to live in. Sometimes a city changes.

For example, Manchester in 1995 was a very run-down town, but now in 2001 it is very vibrant. In this case it has completely changed and there is going to be a Commonwealth Games here next year.

Master degree in UK is a one-year course. MBA is a taught course, where you study for 9 months and then do a research project for the rest of the course. By contrast, MPhil and PhD are courses by research with neither lectures nor exams. PhD is either a three year course or a two year one if you could convince the university that it is related to your master degree's work.

You can also study part-time. A 3-year PhD course becomes a 5-year one if you do it part-time.

Websites of university are generally in the form `www.<name>.ac.uk`, where `<name>` is the name of the university, for example *sussex* (U. of Sussex), `ox` (Oxford), `cam` (Cambridge), `edinburgh` (U. of Edinburgh), `bristol` (U. of Bristol), `london` (U. of London), `kent` (U. of Kent), `hull` (U. of Hull), `le` (U. of Leicester), `wmin` (U. of Westminster), `aberystwyth` (U. of Aberystwyth, in Wales), and `bangor` (U. of Bangor).

I have found a system of Romanised Daiï alphabet, and yet another system of Romanised Lā̤nnā̤ alphabet, the latter one being my true mother tongue.

Peter of the translation group might not realise that one of our earlier talks helped catalysed an idea that had been forming in me for at least three years, and which percolated during the New Year vacation.

Each of the these two systems is simple, aesthetic, and provide an exact one-to-one mapping of the scripts into Romanised alphabet. Hitherto the Daiï one has been deemed impossible, while the Lā̤nnā̤ one would no doubt have been likewise, were it not for the fact that it had been suppressed all along due to some past political reasons and only ten years ago had been considered an endangered language.

I feel that I am up to anything now regarding these two systems. They are now ready to be scrutinised by any scholar of Daiï, Lā̤nnā̤, or even Pali and Sanskrit. These four languages I just mentioned join with one another into a single cluster before my eye.

Though I have solved this particular problem, the more general problem which is in fact a pet project of mine still remain. This is namely how to provide a roman writing system to all the various languages that have not yet got one.

Peter asked me a question. He wanted to know where he could find a grammar book for Lā̤nnā̤.

Of course no such books exist in the roman alphabet he could read. Even I, myself a Lā̤nnā̤, cannot read my own mother-tongue's alphabet well enough to read a book! Moreover, or because of this, no one has written such books. So I decide to write one.

To me, a language is becoming extinct also when there is no way you could write it down correctly. In the case of Lā̱nnạ, its system of writing had been falling out of use and there is nothing to replace it with. But now the situation has been reversed, and the Lā̱nnạ script is making its way back. There is no longer any need for the Romanised system of writing like the one I have discovered except (and this is more important in my point of view) in the study of language families.

Even though Lā̱nnạ is a sister language of Daiï, they are different. For one thing, since the Tonal Split which occurred sometimes during the middle period of *Ȧyudhyạ* the number of tones in the former has become six, whereas that in the latter is five.

In theory you could write Lā̱nnạ using the Daiï alphabet quite easily. But several complications hinder this. One of these is the following.

Both Lā̱nnạ and Daiï divide their alphabet into three groups, namely high, middle and low. And their alphabets are mostly the same or similar. But each often puts the same character into a different group from the other.

Seriously this is confusing. For example, you may write the word '*pen*', which approximately means 'to be', is a word in both languages, and you may easily write the Lā̱nnạ word using the Daiï script. But if it is in a Lā̱nnạ context, you pronounce it not as you would have had it been written as *pén* in Daiï. This is because the letter *p* is in Daiï a Middle Letter while in Lā̱nnạ it is a High Letter.

Seriously, this is so strangely confusing. And the normal practice when people write Lā̱nnạ using the Daiï alphabet is that they change the original spelling into *pén* to facilitate the pronunciation.

This is a serious crime to the grammar. On top of this, as a rule, the spelling *pén* in Daiï implies that the word is definitely not of the Tai language family origin.

In other words, if you write Lā̱nnạ using the Daiï alphabet and change the tonal symbols to facilitate the reading, then it would seem as though they were unrelated languages. In Daiï, for the Middle Letter (say *p*), only *pen*, *pĕn* and *pèn* can be Daiï in origin. *Pēn* is either a foreign word or an onomatopoeia, while *pén* is definitely foreign.

In order to be able to write a grammar book on the Daiï language using Romanised alphabet, one need to have the transcription system in question first. This is what simply does not exist, not only for Daiï but also for Lā̱nnạ and all the other languages within the Tai family.

This is also the case with Chinese and Japanese. Except Japanese, all these languages are tonal. Moreover, in the case of languages based on the Chinese characters, the numerous amount of characters, thousands of them, makes possible only a Romanised pronunciational transcription not a truly

Romanised writing system. In the case of Daiï, where there are many characters having the same sounds, where vowels are numerous and where there are many exceptions in the pronunciation, such a Romanised writing system has usually been deemed impossible.

Early on this year I have found a solution to the problem which I think is the best I have ever seen so far. I have tested it rigorously for Daiï and have convinced myself that it works well there. I have extended it to Lā̱nnā̱, and it seems to work well there too. I have adapted it for both Japanese and Chinese, and now think that it is highly possible to develop these further into systems which give a one-to-one mapping from these scripts to a Romanised one.

There are still more work to be done, if only for the reason of the shear number of their characters. For a number of reasons, Japanese has proved to be much more difficult to tackle than Chinese.

The systems I had designed for Daiï and Lā̱nnā̱ are based on the *Pīn Yīn* system, the Romanised systems for Pali and Sanskrit, a small part from the writing of German, and the rest I myself have designed.

Pīn Yīn was developed in Russia, and it is used in China now. Both Pali and Sanskrit have a perfect Romanised system because they belong to the same Indo-European family as Latin. My aim is for systems that not only work, but also give likeable results.

I think that all languages in the world form clusters. It is not difficult to imagine such clusters or groups of languages. One might ask what are the things which bind languages within the same cluster together, and an answer may possibly be their ancestral history.

Languages will form clusters differently depending on which criteria we think binds them together. I choose the sharing of a common or similar writing system as the criteria. One example is that while Russian and Greek seem so different from English, even though both of them are also Indo-European languages, Hungarian seems more familiar and easier to read, despite the fact that it belongs to a completely different family.

In Asia and Europe there are three major clusters, namely Chinese, Indo-European and Tai. To the Indo-European group belong most languages of Europe and India, and Iranian. To the Chinese cluster belong Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, while to the Tai cluster Daiï, Lā̱nnā̱, and many other languages including Ahom which is now extinct.

The transcription systems which I have designed will help bringing these languages together, make the transfer of knowledge and experience among them easier, create a better understanding among different cultures, and finally lead us closer to the globalisation of our world.

After Japanese and Chinese, I also plan to develop Romanised writing

systems for every language within the Tai family.

I develop these systems along side with macros on TEX. This is the experimental grounds on which I test their applicability and feasibility.

From these macros, in turn, arise yet other systems of lower levels which make it possible for one to write all the writing systems mentioned above by using only standard ASCII characters. In other words, created as a by-product of these macros which I develop are another group of writing systems which can be used to write on normal emails while retaining, by ways of representing accents and tonal marks with certain characters, the exact meaning of the original text.

Admittedly these still seem to be far-fetched and have a somewhat alien look. But to me they look the least alien among the other similar efforts I have ever seen. Moreover, they are easy to comprehend and as easy to use as Pin Yin.

As an outline, my project will be about networks and percolation. My works on the transcription systems fit in because of the introduction I make of the coordination number of a language. This number represents the number of connections between one language to the other languages, and can be raised as a result of the systems of transcription developed.

This fits in with the context of graph theory. Higher coordination numbers mean higher connectivities.

This idea of connectivity and coordination number can also be applied to other things in language study. A word can have more than one meaning. If one consider words as sites, and the same meanings between them bonds within a network, then the number of bonds leading away from each site represents its coordination number, and therefore is the coordination number of the word that site represents.

On the other hand one may think of two different groups of sites, one representing the words while the other their abstract meanings. Then the sites can be mapped between the two groups.

This is similar to the previous case, except that here each site in the second group replaces the various bonds that have a duplicate meaning in the former case. Since sites in the second group are abstract ideas, their identity has to be written in the form of definitions.

Related to my work on the Voronoi networks, I have translated three long seminal essays by G. F. Voronoi, as well as a shorter one by G. L. Dirichlet, on the subject and had it published as a book in Daiï under the title *Voronoi Translated*. The first three are translated from French, while the last one from German into English. The originals were written between late 19^{th} and early 20^{th} centuries.

Mathematics is the subject that I enjoy translating in particular, not only

because of the cheat it allows, for all the formulae only need to be copied as is, but also because it is a subject that remains for a long time, thousands of years that is. And I hope some of the books I write may last that long even after I am already gone.

Christmas and New Year are gone, and with them the snow on the ground. For the latter I am glad because the snow we have always melts and then refreezes, which makes the ground slippery.

This year it always snowed when I was not looking. Aspasia says there has been a record snow in Athens from where she has just returned, which surprises everybody. She dislikes USA so much you would not believe.

I agree with her in most points, but say that I still love them so much. Theirs are magnificent states with magnificent national parks. I suggest that she go there one day, and that she head for the national parks and stick to them not the cities.

If we are what we read, then I know not why there are so many different opinions and ideas in this world. We all read books written in English or some other languages. These books must have been read by other people too. And yet we never agree with each other. But of course, this is obvious, for two books never agree with each other.

My correspondence with Charlie has always been educating. I learn a lot about life from reading his letters.

Some of the things that one learns take some time to absorb. The subconscious mind digests and works on them.

Spring Is Here

Have a nice time camping!
Manchester is all right.
Let me know when you are coming
here. Chinese New Year,
yes!, it's the year of the Horse
again. I was born on such a year.

Then it will be St Valentine's day. How nice!
Spring is here, how nice!
And I am glad to be
talking with you, even though by emails.

If I were interested in learning languages, I would get some books from the library and start reading them. One thing I like about Japan is the quality of the public libraries there. There you learn a lot from books available from the library closest to your home.

Plato is a must. Of course, you should also read other things.

Get yourself a copy of Euthrypho, preferably with the original in Greek, and you are well on your way towards understanding many other things.

Advice is advice. One is free, of course, to find good books by trials and errors. Nothing wrong about that. That is exactly what I do anyway.

I have been reading books on Cosmology, and have come across some works by Frederick Hoyle (1915–2001). He explained the origin of all elements in the universe, an immensely amazing feat, but William Fowler got the Nobel Prize for the work.

However, Hoyle was knighted in 1972, and that is nobler.

I also read books on Mathematics, in particular Geometry. I am investigating in the Voronoi network and therefore need to know more about three-dimensional polyhedra.

It is now Sunday 10$^{\text{th}}$ February 2001. I have not written much to Graham for months, trying to solve all the problems by myself. I decide that I should write to him more often.

As far as I am concerned, Leo has been anything but straight-forward in our correspondences for months. From Graham's retirement until and even now I have been working on the assumption that everything Leo says is from Graham. But when the former said even in our first meeting that I would get nowhere in my PhD if I followed the latter's existing plan, I was flabbergasted.

He subsequently asked me to provide him with codes for calculating all the interactions acting on the particles, and he will provide the code for visualisation part. I thought I had better visualise it myself using Matlab's M-scripts, once the crucial virialisation part is done.

He believed it would do me well to work on a zeolite problem, which he said Stuart was interested in. He thought this is the same as placing cubes randomly, a problem which turned out to be that of percolation of cubes in continuum, whose 2-d presentation is that of squares in continuum.

I solved the 2-d case for n-gons. I told him how I did it, saying that it was possible to carry on in the same line to 3-d, computationally as well as analytically, which I want to do next. I was surprised when he told me the following week to abandon the project, saying that he had already given the same problem to someone else to do. This was before Christmas of last year.

The way I solved the 2-d case above is very beautiful. I wanted to show it to Graham but he never had time. I like to call it 'revolving stars' or sometimes 'dancing stars'.

Just before last week I told Leo how I would tackle the filtration problem. There have been much works which assume particles to be spherical. I want to allow for any shapes of the individual particle, and to use empirical data to shape the statistical appearance of these particles. I want to use sparse

matrices. I will keep only two layers of data at all partitioning surfaces, namely one layer for each side of the boundary, in order to minimise memory space. These two layers will give me enough information on which direction the particles are heading.

I do not think that the randomness assumption applies to crystallised structures like those of minerals and zeolites. The reason is that there are crystals which take more than 100 parts before it repeats itself, and this is only in 2-d and which I have realised using a programme which I have written myself. And I have heard that there are some with a number in excess of 1000.

I think quantum mechanics plays a role in case of crystals. A stronger reason supporting this assertion is the very existence of pseudo-crystals, those which never repeat themselves. Necessarily from the working of these, as well as those periodical units of monstrous sizes already mentioned, it is empirically evident, therefore, that crystallisation is a non-local process. In other words, there must be some kinds of distant coordination or quantum superposition involved here. You may compare what I say above with Penrose's works on the same topic.

Some people are a bane to those who have ideas different from theirs. 'That is too simple an idea,' he would always say.

Or else it would be, 'Somebody must have already done it,' and then, 'therefore it will never be originally yours'.

More likely he would say, 'It is not such a great idea', and you know immediately that he believes it.

'You are wasting your time,' he would keep on repeating, and you could not help but agree with him that you have been wasting your time, indeed, talking to him.

My TEXniques is somewhat better now, so I feel that I should be able to write my thesis wholly in TEX.

Leo still tries to bully me in every way. He has been demanding on a report I had never promised. What would you do if someone were to say to you, 'I don't believe you have searched hard enough'?

He himself would never have a look around, but will assume with authority and certainty that nothing you do is new.

A child could well do what he has been doing to me, and even a kid knows that after a while all your ideas shall be his and you, the poor unsuspecting fool, will be left forever a broken man.

Must I slave for someone who belittles me? I shall never suffer him to be my supervisor.

It is an easy thing to let someone tell you his idea and discovery, only to bluff him afterwards that they are not new, bothering, that is, to find out

neither the reason why nor since when that they have not been new. This is not constructive but destructive and dangerous.

I always write clearly, leaving ample rooms for creative refutations. But this is not even a 'refutation' by any definition, Popper's or no.

It is so easy, for instance, to bluff a man that his discoveries are nothing new and stubbornly, even, to insist that he has not searched hard enough. You should only do that if you have something worthwhile to say, for it is easier to destroy than it is to create.

I have been led to the study of languages through my interest in geometrically modelling the traffic and the economic networks, and I have already done some works there which I think are important, even if they were only preliminary.

I think languages are the things that bind communities or social clusters together, and therefore the applications seem to be numerous. I am prepared to protect my ideas honestly, from more than one examiners and vivas if necessary.

I do not believe in the idea that there can be any other person apart from myself who knows everything about my project. Were this to be the case, in fact, I would even have felt that my works are nothing new. There must be a link among the studies of networks, percolation, economics, politics, psychology, neurology, and languages.

The problem of finding a common written script is in turn reduced to that of finding a one-to-one and on-to mapping between the new script and the existing one.

This at once breaks at least two new grounds. Not only will one have the binding force but also one will be able to describe or even prove it precisely. And fortunately for those who value the importance of cultural diversities, nowhere in history does one see the loss of these through a redundancy of writing scripts. The Devanagari script is still used for writing Sanskrit and the Hebrew script Hebrew, even though either one of these can be mapped on to the roman alphabet one to one.

On the other hand, America is not a Commonwealth country even though American and English are linguistically speaking almost identical to each other, and they do share a common writing system.

Saturday 2$^{\text{nd}}$ March 2002, the weather has been quite cold and dry recently. But we are heading out of a winter. This computer room is on the second floor and next to a railway line. From where I am sitting now looking out of the window one can see the train coming and going.

If there is no further change, I should be arriving in Bạngkauk around 21.00 on 26 March by TG0426. I had better go back and get some sleep now, since it is getting a bit late.

The British Empire gradually dissolved following World War II. The UK now has 13 dependent territories. It forms the Commonwealth with 52 other countries the only one which was never a British colony of which is Mozambique.

The British Empire began in 1497 when John Cabot who was an Italian seafarer sailed across the Atlantic Ocean under King Henry VII to Newfoundland, and then Sir Humphrey Gilbert, an explorer, took Newfoundland for Elizabeth I in 1583. Members of the British Empire, together with their colonial names and the dates of colonisation and independence, are namely

Bangladesh (British East India Company 18th century–1858 *and* British India 1858–1947 *and then* eastern Pakistan 1947–71, 18th century, 1971);
Belize (British Honduras, 17th century, 1981);
Botswana (Bechuanaland–British protectorate, 1885, 1966);
Cyprus (1878, 1960);
The Gambia (1888, 1965);
Ghana (Gold Coast, 18th–19th centuries, 1957), the British Togoland was integrated in 1956;
Guyana (British Guiana 1796–1966, 1620, 1966), under Dutch rule to 1796;
Hong Kong (1841, 1997), returned to China;
India (British East India Company, 18th century–1858, 1947);
Jamaica (16th century, 1962), under Spanish rule until 1655;
Kenya (from 1920, 1895, 1963);
Lesotho (Basutoland, 1868, 1966);
Malawi (British protectorate of Nyasaland 1907–53 *and* Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland 1953–64, 1891, 1964);
Malaysia (Federation of Malaya 1957–63, 1874, 1963), British interests from 1786;
Malta (1798, 1964), under French rule 1798–1814;
Myanmar (Burma, 1866, 1948);
Nigeria (1861, 1960);
Pakistan (British East India Company, 18th century–1858, 1947);
Sierra Leone (British protectorate, 1788, 1961);
Singapore (Federation of Malaya 1963–65, 1858, 1965);
Sri Lanka (Ceylon 1802–1972, 16th century, 1948), under Portuguese and Dutch 1602–1796;
Tanzania (Tanganyika, 19th century, 1961), was German East Africa until 1921;
Trinidad (1797–1962, 1532, 1962), under Spanish rule 1532–1797;
Uganda (British protectorate, 1894, 1962);
Zambia (Northern Rhodesia–British protectorate *and* Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland 1953–64, 1924, 1964); and
Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia from 1923 *and* UDI under Ian Smith

1965–79, 1895, 1980).

Related to the growth and decline of the Empire are the Seven Years' War with France (1756–63), the First Boer War (1880–81), the Second Boer War (1899–1902), the two wars with Afghanistan (1839–41 and 1878–80), the First Opium War (1839–42) and the Second Opium War (1856–60).

Every man should tend to his own task first.

Manchester is bustling nowadays it is true. For me I prefer the good old Manchester of 1994, even when you never knew when you would be mugged and all the streets were dangerous.

Except for them muggers, I find that people around here back then were more humane than most people nowadays.

Founded in 1931, the Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 54 countries and their dependencies. Most of these countries once formed part of the British Empire.

Heads of government meet every two years.

The members in *Africa*, together with the dates they joined, are namely Botswana in 1966, British Indian Ocean Territory 1965, Cameroon 1995, Fiji 1970 and 1997, Gambia 1965, Ghana 1957, Kenya 1963, Lesotho 1966, Malawi 1964, Mauritius 1968, Mozambique 1995, Namibia 1990, Nigeria 1960, St Helena 1931, Seychelles 1976, Sierra Leone 1961, South Africa 1910, Swaziland 1968, Tanzania 1961, Uganda 1962, Zambia 1964, and Zimbabwe 1980.

In *America* there are Anguilla 1931, Antigua and Barbuda 1981, Bahamas 1973, Barbados 1966, Belize 1982, Bermuda 1931, British Virgin Islands 1931, Canada 1931, Cayman Islands 1931, Dominica 1978, Falkland Islands 1931, Grenada 1974, Guyana 1966, Jamaica 1962, Montserrat 1931, St Christopher–Nevis 1983, St Lucia 1979, St Vincent and the Grenadines 1979, Trinidad and Tobago 1962, and the Turks and Caicos Islands 1931.

In the *Antarctic* there are Australian Antarctic Territory joined in 1936, British Antarctic Territory 1931, Falkland Islands Dependencies 1931, and Ross Dependency 1931.

In *Asia* there are Bangladesh 1972, Brunei 1984, Hong Kong 1931, India 1947, Malaysia 1957, Maldives 1982, Pakistan 1947, Singapore 1965, and Sri Lanka 1948.

In *Australia* and the *Pacific* there are Australia who joined in 1931, Cook Islands 1931, Norfolk Island 1931, Kiribati 1979, Nauru 1968, New Zealand 1931, Niue 1931, Papua New Guinea 1975, Pitcairn Islands 1931, Solomon Islands 1978, Tokelau 1931, Tonga 1970, Tuvalu 1978, Vanuatu 1980, and Western Samoa 1970.

In *Europe* there are the Channel Islands which joined in 1931 and which

includes Guernsey and Jersey, Cyprus 1961, Gibraltar 1931, Malta 1964, Isle of Man 1931, and the United Kingdom 1931 which includes England, Northern Island, Scotland and Wales.

Here in England, wholesalers of books are doing very well because smaller shops want to buy from as few shops as possible. I think that in the long run selling to smaller shops with only a few branches may be a better idea than trying to sell to publishers. I would rather not expect anyone to do all the marketing for me. I used to say to myself after having talked to these people, 'If you could stand what they did to you, then you deserve it!", and I can say that it is from my experience. If you like what I have just said, then you may be able to help not only me but other smaller publishers like myself to survive in the future, while at the same time build up your own business bases. But if you only stick to big publishers, they would only treat you as an unimportant toy as I said. You talk to these 'big' people only if you already are big, not before. And then you talk directly with the boss, and that makes all the difference. I am an unknown writer, let alone famous or influential.

Monday 6th May 2002, all else are fine, except that my toes still hurts from an accident while in Daiï.

Tuesday 14th, I want to move into another flat where no one smokes marijuana because it has a bad effect on my health. I have a problem with my ears that my GP thinks is due to a Menière Disease, which is in turn related to the nervous system and the inner ears.

Very often the corridor is filled with the smoke of that drug.

Friday 17th May, I swim at the Aquatic Centre across the street. It will be used for the Commonwealth Games in July.

The file `jdbgmgr.exe` in the `C:WINNT\system 32` directory has a teddy bear as its icon. There has been a hoax which says that this file is a virus and has to be deleted. There is a file of that name which is a Microsoft Debugger Registrar for Java.

More interesting websites are `www.manchester2002-uk.com`, `www.art.man.ac.uk` and `www.bbc.net.uk`.

Yet there are still problems, 2nd June 2002. I have reported my complaint to Mr Leary about one month ago regarding someone in my flat, namely Ash who lives in the flat number E4-2C, that is to say, C for Cannabis, together with his girl friend Janet and some of his friends smoke marijuana.

I write to Ladan in London who works for the Jarvis University Partnerships Programme. According to her, bringing illegal drugs in to the Hall or using it in any part of the Hall is breaching the Licence Agreement. She is certain that our manager Neil will immediately take appropriate action.

Roisin tells me that they have finally found another flat for me to move into. But it turns out that the previous occupant of the flat has gone back to

his home in Greek before his contract comes to an end. I do not think that he will get his money back even after I have moved into his room, and this makes me feel guilty though it can never be my fault.

After I have expressed this thought of mine, Neil writes back to say the police have said that they are unlikely to pursue any allegation of cannabis smoking.

'Even if there is an admission of cannabis smoking,' he says, 'they are unlikely to pursue either'. According to him, the fact that this is in breach of the licence agreement still means that for his company to seek an eviction order they would have to pursue this through the court and would take a minimum of 28 days. They would also have to admit to smoking the substance also.

But then he goes on to say that I do not want the police involved at any cost, which is untrue. If police must be involved, then they must. I have no opinions regarding whether they should be called in or not. What I do not want is secrecy.

I believe that the company is not going to take any action regarding the drug problem in the premise and neither is the police. I do think that unless I could move into another room that is as good as the one I am in now, then they should let me leave with a refund the premise as soon as I can, which I will try hard to do.

I hope that no one will call me unkind. My health problem is real. I have endured the ordeal for at least five months. I did complain and my complaints have been ignored for a month. I have tried my best to persuade those people out of their drug habit for their own good, as hard as I could have done had they been my own children. That being not possible I still have some kind feeling towards them and wish them well.

I reply Neil's letter and say that by not letting me move out with the refund of the remaining rents, he has put the samurai to shame because he has proved that his head always despises his heart, even in such an exceptional case as this.

If the company treats students well, words would spread from mouth to mouth with no one having to say anything. All the other Universities the UK over shall praise its virtue in taking a student's welfare seriously, and future business plans will take off as easily as peeling bananas.

I had been a successful sales engineer in my time when I worked under Ron, so I know that this is the only way to a lasting success of a business, when the trust that the customers put on the company percolates.

This is business, it is true. But it is also the field of percolation in which I specialise. I know that when these little things connect, no effort would be able to stop a company from the percolating and its success.

After this letter, Neil lets me leave the Hall of Residence with a full refund of the rents for the remaining time in my contract.

I feel very grateful to him, and make it my business to come to his office to thank him in person on the day I move out. Both he and Janice are very kind. They bid me farewell at the front gate, and wish me all the best.

We all are born sincere. But the tiny misunderstandings since our childhood years amplify to give us mistrusts of the others, the way fluctuations in the primordial universe gave rise to the galaxies and their clusters. It is true that we cannot trust everyone. But that is only precisely because this mistrust which has been childishly built up is mutual.

When I answered Neil's letter, I wrote the following. I was sorry to have heard that the way he put it sounds so terrible.

'If you are going to put me into another room which has been vacated by someone else before his contract runs out,' I wrote, 'please make sure that that previous occupant of the room receives his remaining money back'.

I was not going to argue further than that. The fact is that some students have to quit their studies before they planned to, which is already disappointing and sad enough for them. I would feel guilty to occupy their room. I asked him not to dress me in such a borrowed robe. I only felt sorry for these overseas students, that is all.

They may have been right when they put me in a disabled room. I have recently become aware that I talk louder and louder into a conversation, and think I am beginning to understand why. I never say that I do not want the police to catch drug users at Sir Charles Groves', but it is not my responsibility.

'But it would have been if you let me be the manager of the place', I says, 'It is unprofessional to interfere with someone else's profession and responsibility'.

How could they expect me to find someone to take my place in a flat where I know there is a drug problem? Shall I not then feel any qualm? Bear with me but I do not think men have lost their reason.

I asked him to please let me leave if I could find a new place, and not to charge me for the room once I am gone. It was in good faith when I paid for my room in full when I moved in. It was not me who complained about the place still unfinished two months into the contract, about no ironing and vacuum facilities being available three months into the contract, nor about no lifts four months into the contract.

I was surprised when I received a cheque of two weeks' rent back from them when I wasn't expecting it at all. But I had not expected to be put into the same flat with a marijuana smoker.

I know the effect of the thing even if they call it weed. I do not understand how they put postgraduate students with someone who smokes this thing. I trusted that they would look after my well being and hope that that trust will not prove to be in vain. I said I was sorry if sometimes I use the word harass when I mean hassle only as much. The dictionary that I am using must be quite old because it gives a similar meaning to both words. I could not understand how the word has come to mean anything related to races. For me I would say the same thing about my fellow countrymen anytime if they harass me.

I used to live once at the Moberly Hall. When I had to move out before my contract ended, I was lucky because the administrator there soon found someone to take my place and as a result I did not have to pay more than a few days more than my stay. But that was during the time when Manchester had turned into a quiet town. May be it is only natural once a town becomes a city again that this kind of thing necessarily disappears.

I have noticed that when I talked my voice unconsciously escalates. I think I have some ideas now what this may imply and why it is so. If any elderly person you know have the same problem I have described, you could let me know. Better still if they know the solution but not the cause of it, because I think I know the cause but not the solution. I think that my ears find it difficult to distinguish a particular voice from the voices or noises in the background.

It is the multitudes of sound, not the level of one, that is the trouble. And the reason why I speak louder as I talk with someone is that my own voice adds to the other existing background noise and makes it louder.

Thursday 6th June 2002, I have done my homework and thereby have found a place to move into, with a confirmation that I will be able to do so as soon as possible once I have moved out from my present place. I do not believe in complaining, no matter how modern the idea seems to be. It was never me who complained about the missing lift, iron, and the Hoover when I first moved in. I am thankful for the two weeks' rent received for these trouble mentioned, and if I said that it should have been two months instead of two it was only a salesman touché to avoid disclosing too much gratefulness. A touché is never followed up.

With my Menière condition, I have endured the marijuana smoke for five or six months. The remaining amount of money that the company should return to me is small, less than the cost for staying for a night in some of the rooms in its hotels. But as I see it, this will prove that it cares for the well being of students, which could be a plus for its future prospects of business in this idea of privatising universities' accommodation. May be in the future both UMIST and the University of Manchester or the combination of both will also become interested in the idea. This is not to mention other universities farther away from Manchester.

My health problem is real, and it is there whether I like it or not.

Experto credite, as Virgil has said, *experto* in Latin meaning simply those who has been through it before. I had some business experience as I used to coordinate a big ad hoc project once when I was working in the Business Development Department at Loxley in Bạngkauk under Ronald who sat in the board of director, and I know that these seemingly little things do count and will help out in the end.

This is the case with most business conglomerations which have percolated. People will hear about it, and the more casually or unintentionally they do the better the effect will be in the long run. I do not normally divulge business ideas as such, except that in this case it could benefit myself and I desperately need the help. I shall keep my fingers crossed for the best.

I should never have boasted about being a pianist. It was only once my dream.

My plan at the moment is to move into the St Gabriel on the 19th and then to move again towards the end of July to Langdale where I will also probably apply for the writing up later.

The Internet is not safe from people with malice. I hope the junk mails sent to people I know do not say that they are from me. You never know.

I often receive an email written in an idiotic or malicious way, and then says that it is from one of my friends. The address would look all very genuine, but when I ask my friends it turns out that they have never sent me such a mail.

For some people obviously these emails are easy to fake. For example, the US government can pry into anything on the Internet, including your emails, if it wants to, because they know all the technologies and encryption algorithms.

The result of my study would only be at best an anticlimax now, so I might as well just do my best there along side with some other activities. It is cloudy weather again today. We have had nice days on and off.

I want one day to go for a walk in national parks in America. That is if I can afford it. Without an office job this seems to be very doubtful. My personal communication has virtually been reduced to the minimum.

After the ordeals I had at my previous accommodation on the Oxford Road, I now live a peaceful life like the calm sea after a storm at the St Gabriel's Hall, 1 Oxford Place, Victoria Park.

Sister Eileen knows who Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort is. This is the same Monfort whom I have known since I was a child, whose name is used as the name of my school in *Jiangmhăi*.

Since I first came here, I live in a room in the basement where it is somewhat

damp. But this is for me better than the noise pollution I had to endure earlier. This place is during term time only for women. But in the summer, men can also stay here.

Areej, who comes from Libia, lives in the room next door to mine. It turns out that she likes listening to loud music. I complain to her sometimes and she adapts her habit to suit my health problem very politely and understandingly.

On the Oxford Road only next door, they are building another such ugly cubicular flats as the one I had just escaped from. The recent fast developments here brings about these ugly flats which I hate. Who knows, perhaps a day will come when these become decently better, and our children may even one day think with a kind humour how terrible their earlier progenitors are at the beginning of the new millennium.

I go out for a walk quite often. I walk along the canal to the Salford Quays and follow the Rochdale Canal far to the north towards Rochdale. I climb up the Kinderscout a few times, and have become very familiar with it and Hayfield. I explore the Mersey River between Sale and Stockport, and pick some cherries from a park. These I bring back with me and have with ice-cream. They taste very nice. But a friend of a friend of mine says that they could be poisonous.

The weather is nice here on and off. Manchester is likely to be very busy during the next two months.

Many students come to study in Manchester from Japan. We have in our basement flats Kota and Shuhei. But it seems to me that we have at least five Japanese students living here, since Hiro and Hara always come here for dinner, not to mention Koji, Mizue, Sayumi and many others.

I should include Woojin in my count too. He is from Korea but speaks so perfect a Japanese that I can never say that he is not from Japan. What is nationality, anyway, but the language one speaks. A society is held together by the language of its people. Two societies are held together by the common features they share between their languages.

Ours is a large kitchen, as I will soon realise. Those kitchens on the first and the second floors are much smaller.

Maki studies now in Los Angeles (LA) in the US, and works helping in an English as a Second Language (ESL) programme. I receive an email from her on Wednesday 15^{th} May 2002 in which she tells me how she is doing. She seems to me to feel attached to Daiï than she does the US.

For all I know, her Daiï is as fluent as a local, the thing that I would never have thought possible.

I wish I could go for a walk in the national parks of the US sometimes. Just one of my dreams as usual.

I wonder whether the series of books called Harry Potter has got its name from Helen Beatrix Potter (1866–1943) who wrote and illustrated children's books, including *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1900).

We have a good collection of books at the St Gabriel Hall. In here silence is observed as in no other libraries, and if it was not you only have to say it once. People here are compassionate. There are also two layers of window, so the silence can be complete when we want.

Here I read *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) by Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson (1850–1894). I wish I could live here a year instead of a month. Shuhei likes the library too, and he is also reading Oliver Sacks.

I read some of the works by Walter Scott (1771–1832), for example *Rob Roy* (1817) and *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). But they are long and winding novels, so I end up skipping some parts and merely browsing others as I go along.

I have tried to read the *Vanity Fair* (1847–48) by William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) several times. I try to read it again here without success, so I guess it is not to my taste.

I walk the Rochdale Canal a few times. It was built between 1799 and 1804. It linked Manchester and Halifax to Hull and Liverpool. It has 92 locks. The section between Failsworth and Littleborough is now designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of the floating water plantain, *Luronium natans*, that grows here.

It is now already Thursday 1st August. I do not know where the time flies to. Guess it does not have to tell me where it does. Anyway, some encouragement arrives today from David. He says that he has only read my message electronically carbon-copied to him at his email address.

As for my difficulties, he says that such a situation should never be allowed to happen. He suggests that I tried to talk it over with Graham.

The trouble is that I have no idea where he is now. I still have not had enough of writing. But if no one thinks that my thesis is good enough, I want to have an MPhil instead.

'But do not give up on the PhD,' he says, 'until you are absolutely sure that degree is out of the question'.

How many misunderstandings come from cultural differences, and how many from the differences in language.

A Japanese teacher may express his thought too harshly about your English teacher, because to him he and you being in the same group are one and the same. But for you, more distance between two persons is needed in order to have enough room to think, be creative, and be yourself.

During our lifetime we may live, laugh and cry, and create. We like to do

this together with someone whom we love. But the fact remains, that we are born alone and all die alone.

Researchers usually have a theme or two which occupy his mind most of the time and appear again and again in whatever he does. My themes are language and percolation, and my definition of language covers Geometry.

Daiï has been involved in quite a few percolative phenomena. The currency crisis in 1997 was like a percolation, if not actually is one. Moreover, it also started a chain of crises all across the East Asian countries and spread as far as New Zealand.

The traffic situation, on the other hand, had always been so bad until the onset of the crisis. I would say that it is one of the things that causes the crisis, or is anyhow caused by the thing which does. In Japan I started to look at the percolation probability of traffic networks.

My idea of an economic model is that it should be a network of people, that is centred on men instead of on money. Most, if not all, of the existing macro- and micro-economic theories are centred around money and put too little emphasis on people. No doubt they cannot explain the economic transitions.

Money is the language of economies never its structure. Languages are the glue which binds everything together. Therefore, any model based on money can only be a model of a language not that of the structure.

If we accept this humanistic network as being important in economic modelling, then we have to look at language. Money may be a language of transaction, but we could do well by studying its flow through the network of men. Language is the thing which binds and segregate the society in to cultures.

There is no racism as such, except that which comes from the difference in language. For example, unlike in Manchester there is no Irish communities in Australia because all Irish descendants there speak Aussie and they identify themselves with it.

For the same reason, most of the Chinese descendants in Daiï never says that they are Chinese because for most Chinese is not the first language.

If language binds society together, what is the thing that binds languages together? Linguistically speaking it may be the historical background they share, but in practice it is always the writings and the writing systems. Therefore not only Chinese and Daiï look different to the Western eyes, but so are the German typefaces in print before the Wars, with its only two special characters, namely those for *tz* and *sz*.

Signs are usually thought of as being different from all verbal languages, not because they are really different but because they could not be written, let alone be written in the roman alphabet.

Both Chinese and Japanese may have their excellent roman phonetic tran-

scription, respectively the *Pīn Yīn* and the Romanji, but neither of these can be considered a writing system. They can only represent the sounds of the language not its script. One can hardly say anything meaningful with them.

Daiï never had a workable roman phonetic transcription, let alone one that could be called a writing system. I have developed roman writings, not mere phonetic transcriptions, for Lāṇṇạ and Daiï.

I am planning the essential outline for those for Chinese and Japanese. I also want to develop a roman system of writing Signs, which must necessarily contain the essential spatial information.

At St Gabriel I move up to live in the second floor instead of moving out to Langdale.

I still join the trips organised by Aoife for the English classes almost every week. Some of the Chinese students bring their family and are at times demanding and loud. But I am quiet and behave myself, so we get on well together. I do not know why I keep calling Aoife 'Eva'. I guess it is because that is what it sounds like. She gives me a strange look whenever she hears me calling her by that name, which is every time. Sometimes I sit on the bus with Kenji who comes from Taiwan.

We go to Buxton, Conwy, Llandudno and York. We also go to Blackpool, but that is different.

Blackpool in the 17$^{\text{th}}$ century was a town of clay huts built around a peat bog the colour of the water of which was black, hence its name. There is a tower there which was opened in 1894. It weighs over 2,900 tonnes, and you will be surprised to hear that it was inspired by the Eiffel Tower. Both could not be more different from each other. While the tower in Paris is proportional and elegant, the Blackpool Tower is simply a tower. We are in Blackpool on 17 August.

The Pavilion Gardens in Buxton was built in 1871 by Edward Milner. There is a hot house with tropical plants. We go to Buxton on 13$^{\text{th}}$ July 2002, when there is the Buxton Well Dressing Festival Carnival during the afternoon.

Not far from Llandudno to the east is the Colwyn Bay. There sank the *Resurgam*, Britain's first mechanically propelled submarine. It was designed in 1879 by George William Garrett (1852–1902), who then had it built at the Britannia Iron Works in Birkenhead, opposite Liverpool on the Wirral peninsula. Garrett lived in Moss Side, Manchester, where his father was a vicar of Christ Church.

Resurgam, Latin for 'I rise again', is expected to be raised and conserved. The submarine sank on 24 February 1880, was found in 1995, and now looking forward to coming up.

Friday 26$^{\text{th}}$ July 2002, my brother has written to say that he is interested in learning how to massage the feet, so I wonder to myself if it is good to

massage your feet? The soles of your feet have got a lot of nerve ends. I think it is not good, for example, to wear sandals with soles raised in the middle to fit the curved part of the feet, because these press on the nerves.

The opening ceremony of the 17th Commonwealth Games was very spectacular. I watched it on the TV here at the St Gabriel Hall of Residence. Manchester is now bustling with people.

We visit York, and on our way there I learn about the Wars of the Roses, those civil wars in England from 1455 until 1485 between the houses of Lancaster and York. The badges of these house are red and white roses respectively. Both claimed the throne through descent from the sons of Edward III. The name was coined by Walter Scott.

I see Maureen, our cleaning lady, every morning. She seems very interested when she knows that I have been baking my own bread.

Peter is our handy man at St Gabriel. I once broke the mirror in my room by accident, and he did not say a word. He likes to listen while I play the piano.

There are two pianos here, one on the chapel on the first floor and another on on the ground floor in the TV room. I doubt if there are more than two. Normally I am the first one to find out all the pianos in the vicinity.

Ian is from Ireland, and Anna is his girl-friend. She once exclaimed, 'Murderer!', when I try to tell her how I gas all the yeasts baking my bread inside the oven.

Bees always come into our kitchen and cannot get out. Koshi always stamp on them with satisfaction whenever he sees one. I rescue them every time I see one.

Giovanni says, 'Don't get yourself stung!' But I am good at doing this. I hold a pan on its path and let the bee walk on to it. Then I simply open the window, and shake the pan outside. The window, however, is high and I have to climb up on to the kitchen's working table to do this.

Anna thinks of me more kindly when I explain to her how I rescue all the bees. 'I put them out side' I says to Anna, 'Not like Koshi who likes putting them out of their misery'.

Friday 2nd August 2002, I wonder what the Kiwi's are doing. The Aussie and the British have been doing quite well in the Commonwealth Games and I have been looking forward to, but have hardly seen any Kiwi in the finals.

Ian Thorpe's swimming is marvellous. My Sixth Form music teacher has got the same last name. Every time I hear the name Thorpe it reminds me of her. She was an excellent teacher.

He definitely has got her nose, but way taller!

Jamie, Kate and Penny are from Australia. They watch the Games too, but I am the only one who watches the swimming competitions whenever he possibly can.

Every year the British Lions, that rugby union team selected from the best players in the British Isles, tours Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The first tour took place in 1888, but the first one whose players are from all the four Home Unions, that is England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, was in 1910. On the New Zealand side is the legendary All Black.

The Union Jack may have a complicated look, but it is actually made of three different simple flags, namely St Andrew's of Scotland, St George's of England, and St Patrick's of Ireland. Its name means that it is meant to be flown on the jackstaff of a warship.

The St George's flag pictures a *plus* sign of red on white. Both the other two flags are a picture of the *multiplication* sign, the only difference being only that the St Andrew's one is white on blue while the St Patrick's one is red on white. In 1707 St Andrew's cross was superimposed on top of the St George's, and in 1801 St Patrick's cross was added.

The two different shapes of cross are called for that of St George *crux quadrata*, or Greek Cross, while for that of St Andrew and St Patrick *crux decussata*, saltire, or simply St Andrew's cross. 'Saltire' is a heraldic term. In French it is *sautoir*.

Both the flag of New Zealand and that of Australia have the Union Jack on the upper-left corner and the Southern Cross on the right-hand side. But the former has four red stars whereas the latter has six white ones. Australian flag's Southern Cross contains the fifth star, and below its Union Jack there is also another star.

Wales and England came together under the Act of Union of 1536 during Henry VIII's reign. Then Scotland joined the two in 1707, thus creating the Kingdom of Great Britain, to which Ireland later entered in 1800 (the Act of Union of 1800 took effect on 1st January 1801) and become the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

The crown of Scotland and England was united in 1603 when James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth I as James I of England.

The Act was revoked in 1922 when the Irish Free State was constituted. Now the United Kingdom comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

I have been watching the Commonwealth Games on the TV. The opening ceremony was very well done, and it was cloudy but did not rain on that day. We have had drizzles and rains everyday ever since though.

Now my time is only divided between watching the Games and study, so there are not many interesting things to mention. Yesterday I bought an

excellent map of the US for 30 pence from a library, and I am reading about the national parks of the world.

My address now is St Gabriel's Hall. It is the same St Gabriel as that to which Montfort College belongs. I walk pass the statue of St Louis Marie de Montfort everyday now. It is exactly the same as those we have in Daiï, which makes me feel like being in a primary school again.

My sister is going to Vienna, but I shall be unable to join her there. I have been to both places once, that is when I went to Italy. Vienna is a city of parks. For example there is the 18^{th}-century Schönbrunn palace with its big park west of Vienna. The Habsburgs used to live there. I walked there, so it is not that far from the latter.

To see the park is free. Only the palace, which I did not see, has an entrance fee. Salzburg is a small town which snuggly lies amongst the mountains. There is not much to do there, though there are a few places which let you have a look inside for a fee.

There is a short walk up to where a castle is. I like the view of the town from there. This is where the film *The Sound of Music* was made, and where there is annually a music festival. Its name in French is Salzbourg. Not far from Salzbourg is Innsbruck with its university and activities and sports for winter.

Vienna is not far from Venice, Florence, and Budapest. You could visit these places if you go to Vienna. All of them are very impressive. West from Vienna is Nice in France, which is in the area known as the 'Riviera'.

Nice, being pronounced such that it rhymes with 'niece', is nice. I think the visa for Austria is a schenken visa which covers all the places mentioned above.

The town Piza, where the leaning tower is, is not far from Florence. Train tickets in Italy are cheaper than those in France and Austria. Likewise they should still be comparatively cheap in Budapest. When I came back to Italy from France or Austria I always bought a ticket only to the first town on the border, and then got off the train to buy another ticket from there. So the ticket from Florence to Nice is cheaper than the one from Nice to Florence even though it is on the same train, because the latter is bought in Italy while the former in France! But they are using the Euro now, and I do not know if that will make any difference to this discrepancy in the price.

I also went to Verona, that town where the real Romeo and Juliet lived. There are the houses of both, and a balcony where Romeo talked with Juliet under the moon. I remember thinking while in Vienna that the city was far bigger than I had imagined. I always associated it with horse-drawn carriages and porters and the musical scenes.

Three cheers for a death

neither obliterated
nor else recorded.

When we say farewell to each other when we are leaving the St Gabriel, Vera wishes me good luck in my adventures around the world. Jesús writes me the following haiku written by Mario Benedetti.

Un pesimista
es un optimista
bien informade.

How true!

On Thursday 29th August 2002, Teruyoshi writes to say that Maki is still studying Sociology in Los Angeles.

They saw the movie *Lord of the Rings* last year, he said, but felt disappointed. This is always the case to a certain degree when good books are made into a film.

My definition of a good book is that it contains two different themes,.one in the background while the other on the foreground. The main theme, the more profound one, is always the former one. Thus all tragedies are by my definition good books.

Other examples include Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and of course Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*.

One can often put only one of these themes into a movie. The background, abstract and philosophical theme one often has to greatly modify or even leave out altogether.

Thus in the case of the Lord of the Rings, for example, the true theme of the book is put into that recurring poem which begins with, 'The road goes ever on and on, down from the door where it began'. Our road starts from the doorstep of our home. Then it leads us along until we join some other larger ways, but we never know for sure where it finally leads us to. The other theme that is put up in front is often childish, exciting, or adventurous.

When one reads the book, therefore, one simply ask no questions how on earth a single ring could command and control the fate of all the earths. What one reads is the philosophy, the second theme. The first theme is in this case invariably irrelevant.

Similarly to this is the case with *Les Misérables*. Therefore Jean Valjean's superhuman abilities becomes irrelevant, considering that the second and more important theme is one of Christian love and sacrifice.

And in *War and Peace* by Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910), the vanity

of Pierre's life and the lives of those around him is of no importance, because what is important is the insight into the non-heroic nature of wars that he gives. *Don Quixote* drives this to an extreme. Here the two themes are not merely different but stand in stark contrast in the juxtaposition with each other, as a result of which the effect is made the more complete and dramatic. It is no wonder that the Italians should think very highly of this work by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547–1616). Here we may forget about Don Quixote's madness for the faith in, and the sacrifices for the ideals of the causes he holds. He is no mad man to us, not an ordinary one in any case even if he was one.

According to Yann, it seemed clear to the Pythagoreans that the distances between the planets have the same ratios as those produced by harmonious sounds in a plucked string.

'To them,' he says, 'the solar system consisted of ten spheres revolving in circles about a central fire, each sphere giving off a sound the way a projectile makes a sound as it swished through the air; the closer spheres gave lower tones while the farther moved faster and gave higher pitched sounds'.

'All combined into a beautiful harmony, the music of the spheres', he adds.

'Believe in your ideas', he says to me, 'moreover they are beautiful'.

I move from St Gabriel to Moberly Hall in September.

On 13 September 2002 I talk with Brian who is a porter at the Moberly Hall where I now live in.

'Oh, yes! I remember Bobby. He used to make Daiï curry so hot I could not breathe,' he says, then carries on, 'I have here cards from some other Daiï students. Do you know *Bhạnubongṣ*? He's still here.'

'Bobby always said that I could come and visit him over there. He said he has a house and everything. He's a lecturer,' Brian says in his amiable Scottish accent.

'His university,' I tell him, 'the university where he lives and works is very good. It is in a very nice town four to five hundred miles from Ḅạngkauk. You should come and visit Thailand sometimes.'

'I have never been anywhere outside the country before,' he says.

From the windows of my room you can see the Holy Name Church (1867–1871). It is now Grade I listed and receiving a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. They have covered it with vinyl all over, and are strengthening it up.

§

Bucky-ball has been a big surprise of the past decade. All chemistry textbooks until 1990 had taught that carbon has only two crystalline forms, that

is graphite and diamond. Now we know that there exists a whole family of carbon-cage structures.

The prototype of the fullerene family, carbon-60, has as its faces twelve pentagons and twenty hexagons. Its shape is that of a football.

Like sand, zeolites are aluminosilicates. But here there are large internal cavities. The internal surface area of a piece zeolite the size of a sugar lump is about the size of a football ground. This leads to their application as molecular sieves which are shape- as well as size-selective.

October 2002, AMC Cinemas on Deansgate are running a promotion programme where you can watch their movies free of charge by simply printing out a voucher from their website and exchange it for a ticket at the ticket counter.

This way I watch several films, including the *Reign of Fire* which I think is very propagandistic. In it the world has been reduced to ashes by dragons. You may get rid of all of them by taking care of their leader, the male dragon. It is in England where a boy found it, and it is here where it is finally killed.

Our Jack is English, and yet his mother is American and they could do it only because the troop from the US comes to help them. Such film like this needs no scriptwriters to write the story. It is what one would expect to find in the world of fascism and its propaganda.

I remember having asked the girl at the ticket booth whether is was a Hollywood film, and she said that she did not know. The film contains a mixture of American and English, so it would have been difficult to answer the question.

But this place itself is amazing. There are so many cinemas here that I lose count. This is not the Manchester I knew in 1995 but a European capital.

The FBI may be American but the BFI is British. It is the British Film Institute founded in 1933 to promote the cinema as a mean of entertainment and instruction. It includes the National Film Archives (founded 1935) and the National Film Theatre (founded 1951).

Leo writes essentially to everyone. He says that he finds it hard working with me. He feels that the planned thesis submission date for December 2002 is ambitious.

'But Brutus says he was ambitious. And Brutus is an honourable man. So are they all, all honourable men.'

§

I am not mad. I am demoniac. I am madness maddened.

Tuesday 15$^{\text{th}}$ October 2002. Last night I went to a dinner at Platt Church

with Carlos, and afterwards went to visit his place where he stays with two Daniel's one of whom is in our Chemical Engineering Department while the other is a member of the Conservative Party.

Today I have to move out from Moberly Hall again. The last time was in 1995. I shall miss the view of Kinder Scout, though it is too far away and I do not know which peak is the one.

When I wake up it is already 8 o'clock. I have no time to cook. There is only one microwave oven for more than ten people anyway.

I take a shower and then come down to the front desk. John the porter on duty says that I would need to leave before half past nine, otherwise I will be charged £12. I have to hurry up. I go upstairs to my room in a lift, push my big bag out of the room into the corridor and climb the stairs down to the third floor to ask Pat, who then calls Gillian who says the same thing. I am resolved now to pay the £12. Then get I a trolley from the ground floor and take it up to my room. I pack all my belongings in it and come down to the ground floor.

At the porter's desk I return the room keys and then sit in the corner where the telephones are, out of sight, and sort and throw away brochures I have been collecting.

I have to leave behind the bucket and mop that I have used to do the washing. This I place by the lift door, hoping that someone will benefit from my beloved mop and bucket. Most likely they will have to clean the floor instead of washing clothes as I have subjected them to.

I push the trolley all the way to UMIST where I leave it in B9 while putting the big bag in C62. All the odds and ends I put either in my locker in C62 or the one I have in B9. Then I return the trolley to John at Moberly and get the black cap which I forgot and left behind there in my room.

The remaining yeasts I give to Pat. There still remain about half of them in the can. 'I wouldn't like to throw them away because they are alive,' I tell her.

I go to the office of Singapore Airline where I am told that my flight back to Daiï on 23rd December has already been confirmed, and so there is a need to leave them neither Carlos's mobile number nor the number of B9.

From here I go to the coach station, the new Chorlton Street Coach Station, and buy myself a Traveller Trail Pass for £160 which allows me 14 days of unlimited trips within 60 days' time. I shop at Quiksave and then go to the John Rylands Library.

Then I return to UMIST and get on a coach at 1.30 the next morning to Glasgow.

The coach station in Glasgow is called the Buchanan Coach Station. It is

still dark here at 7 am. The lounge is still not open. It is closed during the night until 7.30 am.

I plan to go to Fort William. It is very cold this morning. To go to Fort William I need to change from a National Express coach into a Citylink one which is Scottish. Though I have a ticket to go to Fort William, I would not be able to come back since my coach card is only valid for England and on National Express services. So I decide not to go.

However, the bus that goes to Fort William from Glasgow is quite interesting. It goes further all the way to Portree in the Isle of Skye. Between Fort William and Inverness the road passes a scenic route along Loch Ness, but no National Express's coaches pass that way.

The Citylink coach driver is short-tempered for I am holding up the queue of a few people, asking him questions.

'Can I get another ticket for returning from Fort William from you? The girl in Manchester must have forgotten to book a return seat for me,' I says to him.

'I said, "No!" You will have to pay if you want another ticket. Your Traveller Trail Pass is not valid for travelling within Scotland. For that you need a Scottish Rail Pass. Go to the ticket office! I should have left here five minutes ago.'

So in that state I leave this moody coach driver who seems perfectly normal otherwise, and book myself another seat but not to Fort William.

I get on another coach to go to Bournmouth. The route from Glasgow to Bournmouth proves to be very long indeed. Trains here are faster than coaches. The trip takes ages and I feel very sick just before it ends.

After I arrived I have fish'n chips from a shop which gives a 10 per cent discount to students with a student card. The railway station is nearby and there are taxis parking between there and the bus terminals. But as is the case with the coaches, no trains run during the night.

I get on a coach and go to Poole as that is the only one available at this time of the night.

Poole has more shops. There is a promenade which leads to the piers. I walk there and find it very pleasant. There are hotels and restaurants. Boats dock there. There will be no more coaches until morning, so there is no need to hurry.

I sit in a few places watching the boats sleeping. It is by no means cold. I only have a woolen shirt on top.

After the restaurants have closed I walk back to the station to wait for the first coach at three in the morning which will take me to the Heathrow Airport. Two Japanese girls have missed their train and so are also waiting

to get on the same coach.

The night, or rather the morning, is cold. I sit inside an instant photo booth to avoid the wind. Both girls are shivering from cold. '*Koshi ga samui!*', one of them says. A man approaches them and draws them into a lengthy conversation. I hear him say he is also going to the airport. He is all talks, for when the coach finally arrives he does not get on board.

I have a pair of long johns on, and so fare better than the girls. I alternately get up to walk about and sit down in the booth where it smells of chemicals. The plastic stool feels cold against my buttocks when I sit down. We all welcome the Flightlink when it finally arrives. I fall to sleeping as soon as I get on the coach and sit down, and only find out later that I must have dropped my black cap on it, the very one I have retrieved earlier from Moberly Hall.

I arrive at Heathrow sleeping and have to be wakened up by the driver. I have a look around, walk to terminal 1, 2 and 3, and clean myself inside a disabled toilet.

Once the ticket office for the coaches opens, I book a ticket to Bristol. I plan to go from there to Aberystwyth. I get there before noon, but the coach to Aberystwyth would not leave until after four and the trip will take five hours. By the time we are there it will be 9 pm.

I get myself a ticket to go to Penzance and plan my trip tomorrow to Inverness. I should have liked to meet Graham in Manchester on Friday, though the meeting is not confirmed. I book a return ticket to Manchester, which I never use because I change my mind and decide to go to Penzance instead.

The trip to Penzance passes the moors and the coast lines. We stop at Plymouth where the weather is perfect with clouds but very sunny. In all these respects it is similar to the New Plymouth in New Zealand, and thus reminds me thereof. I sit behind an elderly lady who sits in the front-most right seat just behind the driver's seat.

The driver is a good-looking lad who wears his hair long and ties it together behind his head. He is happy and talkative. A great part of the passengers are the elderlies. I drink on the way the lemonade which I bought earlier at Mark & Spencer in Bristol. It goes very well with this summer weather.

Marks & Spencer is a chain of stores founded in 1884 by Michael Marks (1863–1907), and joined in 1894 by Thomas Spencer (1852–1905) who was a cashier at one of his suppliers. Michael Marks was a Jewish Russian refugee.

His first stall was set up at the market place in Leeds with the slogan, 'Don't ask the price, it's a penny'. The number of stalls and shops had increased by 1900, and in 1903 it became a private company Marks & Spencer Ltd. The company went public in 1926, the *St Michael* trademark registered in 1928, and in 1998 there were 289 stores in the UK, 260 in North America, 90 in

Europe and 33 in the Far East.

Most parts of the road are no motor-ways and are winding at some points. Now there are some wind turbines to the right, partially hidden behind a small rise in the ground. They must be for generators of electricity because they look similar to the ones I saw in a picture of wind farm.

The driver's name is Craig. He does the last stretch alone when he drives faster and at one point forgets to close the luggage door. A passenger who sits in the back seat reminds him, for which he is gratefully thanked.

It has just gotten dark when we arrive in Penzance. The train and the coach and bus stations are close to each other and to the sea. A staff tells me to step into the common room out of the rain when I ask him whether he could give me some hot water.

I show him the empty Marmite bottle I have, so he understands what the water is for. You wash the bottle with hot water to make a delicious soup.

From here you may take a short walk to a lovable promenade. There is a park there on the ground bought by Queen Victoria in 1897, the name of which is Bulitho. Whether this be an Indian name I do not know.

A long promenade stretches between and parallel to this Victorian park and the sea, the latter of which is some fifteen feet below.

Penzance is in Cornwall, a resort and seaport on Mount's Bay twenty-four miles southwest of Truro. It is interesting to note that Cornwall is called the *British Riviera* by the English while the real Riviera in France, that coast around Nice, is known to the French people as *la promenade anglaise*, that is to say, the *English Promenade*.

The driver of the next and last coach tonight which goes to London do not let me get on his coach with my pass, since I have not made a reservation and he says all the seats will be filled up in Plymouth, so I shall have to wait for the first coach in the morning that leaves at 4.10.

I walk in the night for a few hours along the promenade. There are stars in the sky. The moon is nearly full and I think I could twice see a shooting star.

At one a.m. a man comes up in his car which he parks by the beach a little way beyond where I stand and then play either an accordion or a Scottish bagpipe. I think it is the latter for it feels like that which I heard played in the film *Local Hero*, never mind this being about the farthest point on the whole of the British Isle from Scotland. The several tunes he plays perfectly suit the mood of the surroundings and the atmosphere.

He leaves after half an hour and I am left alone walking in the darkness lit only by the moon, the street and city lights. There are some breezes but it is neither windy nor as cold as the previous night in Poole. Clouds come at

three bringing with them some drizzle, but they soon leave.

The name 'Penzance' is derived from *pen sans* which means *holy headland* in Cornish. Markets were established in the 16^{th} century. The Victorian railway station here was built by the Great Western Railway.

I have been sleeping in bits and pieces, so I do not feel that much sleepy. But once on the coach, I sleep most of the way and see nothing much until well after we have passed Plymouth.

My coach eventually goes to London, so I change here into another one which goes to Bristol. I manage to keep my eyes open just before we arrive in Bristol, so I can see that it is a nice day.

There is still plenty of time before the coach to Inverness leaves, so I go to Cardiff which is to the west of and not far from Bristol.

Before I leave Bristol I walk to a park where there is a river and some ruins of the remains of Bristol Castle.

There is an entrance of a tunnel dug from inside the castle that leads to outside the wall. This was used for mounting a surprise attack on attacking troop outside. This tunnel must have been carefully guarded to prevent a *reverse surprise attack*. Anyhow its entrance is locked up now with iron bars. There are some cans and bottles thrown in there from the outside. There are also puddles of water and it looks damp inside.

Cardiff is in another country, that is to say, Wales where it is the capital. I have half a day there. There is a river not far from the coach station, and there is there a large building that looks like a ship.

Between this ship-shaped building and the river runs a raised promenade the fence of which is a wavy curve. The afternoon sun comes across the river and meet the fence first before it touches the boarded floor of the path, so that there arise wavy lines of shadow on the floor along the path where you walk. Everyone is misled by this shadow pattern which prevents one from walking in a straight line. Unconciously you would snake along the boards.

There is a park at the other end of the path. I like the park and I am glad that I started my walk instead of staying around the station. At the park there are some ruins presumably of an old church, and there is a college of music.

There is also the Cardiff Castle which is open to the public but there is a fee charged to get in. The moat around the castle is now fully filled up and there is there lawns instead of water.

I walk to the National Museum and Art Gallery. The collections are rather small, although there is a good one of prehistoric Britain. All metals are now rusted and reduced–copper becomes brittle and crumbling while swords become mere thin ribbons–all except the gold, which still shines and looks

brand-new, exactly the same as they must have looked millennia ago.

Then I return to the coach station, which is really a bus station where there are only a few stands reserved for and shared by all the coaches. I check in at a counter where boarding passes are issued. To prevent people getting on the wrong coach these come in different colours. Mine is a yellow one. I have to stand aside while those with the blue one are boarding their coach.

The coach I wait for comes half an hour late, so that once back in Bristol I do not have to wait long for another one to go to Inverness.

Waiting for the Inverness coach now I want to buy some food from Mark and Spencer, impressed with the marmalade I bought the other day, but it is already closed. So I walk around until I find one Tesco that is still open. I only buy a loaf of bread to go with the Salami. I was going to say Marmite but for the fact that I have already finished it here yesterday before I went to Penzance.

And I remember trying to find some hot water to wash the bottle to make a soup. A café at the Bristol coach station would sell the hot water for 10 p. Another one at the station in Plymouth also said the same thing, where the owner also added, 'We are here for business not for charity'. Anyway I do not think that a thimbleful 50 ml of hot water would have made much of a charity, so impressed with this attitude of his I kept my exhausted Marmite bottle and waited until we were in Penzance.

Again, the trip to Inverness is a long one but it is less wearing than the one I earlier took from Glasgow to Bournmouth. In Glasgow I change into another coach. Thankfully it is not as cold as the last time I was here.

Also, somebody opens the tour lounge at the far end of the rows of stands. In there it is snugly warm, and the toilets are free besides instead of costing 20p as is the case with those at the main hall.

Beside the tour lounge there is a small door which has a number pad for entering the pin number to open the door. The door opens on to the stairs which leads up to a lounge used by the crew on the first floor.

The Buchanan coach station is rectangular in its layout, with roofed paths running along the rims and the coaches gathering on the inside. The path only breaks at one corner where the buses and coaches enter and leave.

It was Friday 18$^{\text{th}}$ October 2002 yesterday when I left Bristol for Glasgow on Service 336 at 20.10. Today is Saturday when I am in Inverness. It is drizzling and I shop at a supermarket nearby. I come to the public library which is next to the coach terminal. Then I walk from there to the tourist information centre. There is an excursion in an hour to go to Loch Ness and cruise on a boat. There is a discount if you buy your ticket here at the Information Centre and if you are a student. But I choose instead to walk to the river and then go up the hill on the other side.

It is lovely along the river bank in the middle of which there is a big island where you can explore on foot. I like sitting on the bank of the river watching it flows, and everywhere still alive for it is only autumn.

The walk up on the hill is equally enjoyable, except that there are more paths than those shown in the rough direction from the information centre. I manage to hit the wooded ridge overlooking the sea. Tracing along this I finally reach a road which I follow until come to a bridge where there are a series of water gates. I return to Glasgow that evening, and then on Service 336 at 11 pm to Manchester.

The one thing I like about this coach service is that about mid way to Manchester it stops for half an hour at a place where there is a shower room which I come to use several times during the course of my Tourist Trail Pass period. It is an interesting service which shuttles between Glasgow in the very north to Penzance in the very south. Along the way it hardly stops at all between Glasgow and Bristol, but does so more frequently in Cornwall. It sometimes stops in Manchester before going to Birmingham, but often there would be an auxiliary coach carrying people from Glasgow to Manchester. This latter is usually no National Express coach. I guess that this is because Manchester has grown too fast, which results in an increased number of passengers. I reach Manchester after midnight. There are still many people on the street around the coach station. I walk pass the Gay Village to my desk in Jackson Mill B9 at UMIST and there work at a computer until morning. For two months hereafter it will be my fate that Sleep shall have to find me on a chair, a seat on the coach or anywhere except on a bed in a home.

County is the Norman name equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon term *shire*. There are only two counties in England the name of which contains the word 'Greater', one is Greater London and the other Greater Manchester. It seems to me that the former is the capital of the country and home of the Conservative Party while the latter the capital of the world's industrial revolution and the labour movement and consequently home of the Labour Party.

In the 1980s the gap between rich and poor increased. Blair's *New Labour* won a landslide victory in May 1997. The Party's anthem is 'The Red Flag', written by the Irish socialist Jim Connell (1850–1929).

There are now in England 6 metropolitan counties, 34 non-metropolitan counties and 34 unitary authorities. In 1966 the Welsh and Scottish counties were abolished and replaced by 22 and respectively 33 unitary authorities. Northern Ireland has six counties.

Scotland, 25$^{\text{th}}$ October 2002. Again on Service 336 I go to Glasgow, then change into Service 916 to Fort William. The date written on my tickets is yesterday's. I have postponed them one day, and that poses no problems.

It starts to drizzle shortly after I arrived in Fort William. I walk to the

public library from where the coaches stop. There is a railway station on the left-hand side and the path to the library leads through the underpass to the other side of the road. Browsing around inside the library I find the Jacobite Trilogy by D. K. Broster which seems to be an interesting book.

Fort William was founded in 1690 by General McKay who named it after King William. Its Gallic name is *An Ghearasdan.*, which means 'the garrison'. The Great Glen Way stretches 73 miles from the Great Glen or Glenmore to Lochness, thus connecting Fort William to Inverness. There is a plaque, a tribute to Bailie Angus White, *ex desertis fecit flores.*

The West Highland Way is a path that goes from Fort William to Devil's Staircases, Loch Tella, Loch Lomond and then to Milngavie.

There is a circular walk which I take. At one point it breaks off to go up to a radio station, after which I retrace my steps back to the circular path. Here I am too absorbed in my thought that miss the turn the first time, and have to walk an extra half mile back to it again.

From there a path leads down into a valley, then along a creek or river until it finally returns to Fort William. The last stretch runs along this rivulet and a road which I keep on my left and the former on my right.

I meet a young farmer and his wife working on their sheep. It has been overcast all day and had started to drizzle as soon as I started to walk.

'Not a good day to come here in this weather. You cannot see anything through this fog,' says the man after saying 'Yes' when I asked him whether it is the road to Fort William on which I now walk.

'I quite like the weather,' I return, 'It is not too hot to walk around when it is overcast, except for the fog of course'.

A little after that there is a Wishing Stone, aka Samuel's Stone or Clach Mic Shomhairle, a big black stone about the height of a man. In Scottish Gaelic, Counsel Stone is called Clach Chomhairle.

At 7 pm, not long after it got dark, I return to Glasgow and from there to Manchester at 11 pm.

Sunday 27$^{\text{th}}$ October 2002, again from Manchester to Glasgow at 1.30 am via Service 336. From Buchanan in Glasgow to Aberdeen is by Service 592 which goes to Aberdeen on the coast north from Edinburgh and south of Inverness. The service carries further on and terminates at Inverness.

Today is the end of British Summer Time daylight-saving. The clock which has been pushed forward one hour on the last Sunday of March is now taken back again to, for these countries, the Greenwich Mean Time.

So unless you adjust your watch the coach to Aberdeen will appear to leave one hour ahead of its 7.15 am schedule. You need to take precaution when you travel just past the end of the daylight-saving period like this.

The toilet sets inside the toilet on Castlegate Beach are beautiful China porcelain from North Oxford.

I walk from the station to the beach, noting the location of the museum along the way. At the beach I follow a Shore Trail North that leads up to the top of a hill overlooking some cricket grounds and the sea.

It is windy; the sky is bright but with clouds and the rain has yet to come. I like the point where I am standing now on top of a small hill. I put on my cap backwards to prevent it from being blown away by the wind.

You can see a long stretch of shore line with cliffs in the distance. There is another, larger hill on the shore south of Aberdeen on the other side of a river. To the north there is also another river. Aberdeen sits between these two river mouths.

The Body, Mind and Spirits group is holding a conference in one of the buildings which stand facing the sea. I have helped them in the kitchen at their other conference in Bangor back in 1995. I have a look inside, but do not think anyone would have recognised me. You need to pay to attend the therapy classes.

I walk back to the museum while the day is so fine. By the time it closes the rain will have come. The streets are all busy by now, this is after all a big town.

Inside the museum is displayed a bathythermograph dated from 1940s. This kind of instrument was developed in 1938 by Wallace and Tiernan to record the change of temperature against depth. This it records by using a stylus controlled by thermometer moving across a smoked slide, the smoke being produced by burning bear grease. With a bathythermograph the structure of thermodine is discovered which is the layer of rapid temperature change between surface and deep water.

The Faroe Shetland Channel is more than 1,000 metre deep and separates the Scottish Continental Shelf which is 200 metre deep from the shelf surrounding the Faroe Islands.

Each second seven million cubic metres of warm Atlantic water flows through the channel. The North Atlantic Water has the salinity of 35.4 and is $-10°C$. From this, the salinity decreases with depth into Modified North Atlantic Water, Arctic Intermediate Water, Norwegian Sea Intermediate Water, and then slightly increases in Norwegian Sea Deep Water which has the temperature of $-2°C$ and the salinity of 24.8.

The North Sea lies among Norway, England and Belgium. It is rich with oil, the fact that was first known to Askeladden when he exclaimed, 'I found it! I found it!'

Not long before he did an international conference in Geneva in 1958 gives the right over the Norwegian Continental Shelf to Norway. So Norwegians

woke up one day to find that they are in the possession of this vast oil reserve, one of the greatest in the world.

The immediate impact of this discovery is on the Norwegian economy. But more than that it also has an influence on the world politics and Russia, the only superpower which has little oil reserve of its own and where most of its natural gas is in the faraway Siberia.

The Perestroika was an attempt to remedy the effect of this shortcoming. The discovery of oil in the North Sea exacerbates the situation for Russia and the tragedy at Chernobyl seals its fate.

Yes the Internet plays an important part in disintegrating USSR, but it is Oil, as it always has been since time immemorial, that does the job. Russia could not export its enormous amount of natural gas to the West because petroleum suddenly became cheaper at a crucial moment.

Having Oil may not be a sufficient condition for being a superpower, but it is a necessary condition for the same. Following the same line of thought it is now the US's turn to worry. With its energy-gobbling industries, America would have to be able to control the price of oil it purchase if it wants to keep all its fifty States together, let alone stay remaining superb in power.

Thus one can easily see where the 11^{th} September 2001 events in America, the US involvement in Afghanistan in 2002 and the Rape of Bagdad in 2003 come in.

A nomad Hoyle may say, 'Home is where the wind blows', but every American knows that *home is where the wealth is*. Thou shalt have no peace until thou have the Petrol. And for that no one shall remain in peace. Neither shalt thou be at peace after thou have gained the Petroleum. Modern civilisation based on technology has never known a time when it did not revolve around Oil.

Norway claimed its sovereignty over the oilfields in its continental shelf in 1963 and the first drill started in 1966. Phillips Petroleum discovered the Ekofisk Field in 1969. The whole Shelf is divided into rectangular grids which are leased out for exploration and extraction. Some of the other earlier Oil and Gas fields are Frigg, Hod Valhall, Murchison, Odin and Statfjord.

Chemicals used in the Oil Industry, for example anti-fouling paints, as well as drilling mud and cuttings smother life on the seabed. This together with the fact that the Total Allowance Catch are not always followed leads to the decline in fishery catches during the twentieth century.

Robert Boyle (1627–91) found out that the ocean depths are cold not hot. Therefore the earlier diver's suits are big because they are flooded by hot water. Air is pumped to the diver from the ship through a cord connected to his bulgy helmet in the same way that oxygen is passed from a mother to her embryo and foetus through the umbilical cord. The air contains a

mixture of helium and oxygen. The helmet recovers the gas for reprocessing, for otherwise a diver would bubble away £2,000 worth of gas each day.

Until 1950s the pump was turned by hand and communication was done with rope. The signals are, one tug for attention or stop, two for lower, three for heave or pull up, four for diver coming up, five for more air, six for less air and four tugs twice to say that the diver is in danger.

The boots worn by these divers have a mass of iron underneath. Each boot weighs 16 lbs. The helmet is made of copper and the dress solid sheet India rubber between two layers of tanned twill. By the early twentieth century men clad in this are at large on the bottom of the sea up to 210 foot deep.

Weather forecasting announcements have jargon of its own and a definitive way of saying things. The museum gives a typical forecast, 'Forties, southerly five veering westerly and increasing gale Force eight, showers, good,' which means that in the area of the North Sea designated by the name *Forties* the wind blows clockwise from south to west, increasing to a gale with Beaufort Force eight. There are showers but the visibility is good.

Perhaps for the purpose of weather forecasting, the sea around the British Isles is divided into regions. These regions are sometimes named after banks, for instance Bailey, Biscay, Dogger, Fisher, Forties, Sole and Viking; sometimes after islands, namely Fair Isle, Faroes, Hebrides, North Utsire, Portland, Rockall, South Utsire and Wight; and also after river or estuary, that is Cromarty, Forth, Humber, Shannon, Thames and Tyne. There are also Malin and Finisterre both of which are named after a headland; Dover and Plymouth, after a town; Fasnet, after the rock off Ireland; German Bight, after a coast; Biscay, after a bay; and Irish Sea and Southeast Iceland.

Reservoirs occur when the petroleum formed in sedimentary rocks migrates into permeable rocks, for example sandstone which is also sedimentary. These latter hold the oil like sponge. Most of the oil reserves found in UK are in Middle Jurassic Sandstones which date from around 200 million years ago. Approximately seventy per cent of North Sea oil fields date from the Jurassic period. These include Beatrice, Brent, Cormorant, Murchison and Tartan.

Similar to water absorbed in a sponge, oil permeated within sandstones can be modelled as a percolation of one phase in a fixed structure containing another phase. Here the two phases are respectively oil and water. Internal to the sandstones are pores which are filled with either water or oil.

My supervisor Graham is an expert in the field of percolation as applied to Chemical Engineering. He goes to Norway a few times, and I guess it is something related to the oil fields there.

The story of the British Petroleum begins in 1909 when the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was founded. In 1967 this company acquired the chemical interests of the Distillers Company. The British Petroleum was established in 1917 as a marketing subsidiary of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. The

latter changed its name into the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1935, while the former became the British Petroleum Company in 1954.

Pelargic fish swim near the surface while demersal ones live deeper.

Purse seining is a fishing technique whereby weighted nets are dropped from a ring of floats and then pulled up by a rope.

Trawling is another technique where a great pouch of a net is dragged along by a boat, the lower rim equipped with heavy ground gear to keep them on sea bottom while the upper rim is fitted with floats.

Drifting is as its name implies one in which a drift net drifts with the tide.

Great lining is a technique in fishing in which hooks are connected to the tipping which is then connected to the main line by a long thread of snood. These techniques are bad for both the fish and the people, for the latter because in the long run there will be no fish left for them. For example some of them obliterate schools of herring while others suffocate droves of dolphins.

Information on how to navigate passed from person to person. There were no books on the subject. Some of the tasks are hard work as well as dangerous, for example reefing where by sails on old ships are rolled up in bad weather.

Since tonnage of the ship's cargo is registered only that part in the middle of the ship, *clipper ship* was created whose bow is longer and stern fatter. The larger compartments at the bow and stern may carry cargoes which are thereby exempted from Harbour dues. In other words they are tax-free.

The first oil tanker was designed by Ludwig Nobel and built in Sweden.

The Northern Lighthouse Board was established in 1786.

After the museum I walk around the city.

The Provost Skene's House was opened on 30 September 1953 by H. M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. It originally stood on the Guest row, one of medieval Aberdeen's principal streets set in a prosperous part of the town.

The west wing of the house with its curved plaster ceiling, built in and typical of the seventeenth century, was used for entertainment. There is the Coat of Arm of Sir George Skene. The acronym IHS, which stands for '*Iesu Hominum Salvatore*', appears on the wooden ceiling in the chapel.

The Painted Chapel is divided into two large rooms with a narrow compartment between the low plaster 1951 ceiling hiding the original plaster board walls. The original decorative scheme is wooden ceiling and floor and the walls are plaster on wood.

In 1952 the Ministry of Works for Scotland conserved the painted ceiling by filling in all the gaps. A binding mixture of wax, resin and oil was applied on the ceiling to consolidate the paint and prevent flaking, the technique which

is no longer used since the wax mixture penetrates the wooden support and changes the appearance of the painting. The Second Phase of the restoration during 1971–72 removes all the wax.

Outside the place is written, 'Residence of Sir George Skene, Provost of Aberdeen 1676–1685'. It has four levels, a basement and two turrets. The outside is made of stone while the inside of wood.

There is another museum on the ground which belongs to the University of Aberdeen.

Aberdeen or *Aiberdeen* is the name of a shire. Native or citizen of this shire is called an *Aberdonian*.

The word *Caledonian* means pertaining to the ancient Caledonia, the highlands of Scotland, or to Scotland in general.

Here was a centre of astronomical research back in the eighteenth century.

The broadsword is a Highlanders' large two-edged sword. One of those on display here is about six feet from hilt to tip, in other words it is longer than I am tall.

Another combination of weapons typical to the Scots are sword and targe, the latter of which is a small shield.

Some of the renowned figures of this city are Patricia Copland (1749–1822, d. 10th November), James Clark Maxwell (1831–1879, b. 13th November), David Ferrier (1843–1928, b. 13th January) and Rev. Alexander John Forsyth (1768–1843, b. 28th December, d. 11th June) who established a saving bank and also introduced the small pox vaccine to the North East. Here George Gordon Byron attended the Aberdeen Grammar School during 1794–8.

In Scotland the last day of the year, the 'Hogmanay', is celebrated with bonfires, divination rites and quizzing.

The Marischal Museum is inside the Marischal College, one of the two colleges of Aberdeen University both of which were once an independent university. It was founded by the fifth Earl Marischal of Scotland in 1593. In the same building is the Church of Scotland.

The Church of Scotland was recognised by the state for the first time in 1560. It follows the Protestant doctrines of Calvin. In 1690 those who adhered to episcopacy formed the Episcopal Church of Scotland.

The Disruption came in 1843 when a third of its ministers and members left and formed the Free Church of Scotland. The United Church of Scotland was created as a union between the United Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland in 1929.

The Church of England is a member of the Anglican Communion which dissociated itself from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 under Henry VIII.

The service book is the *Book of Common Prayer* (1660) which is based on the *First Prayer Book of Edward VI* (1549).

The first English translation of the Bible was by Miles Coverdale in 1535. The *King James Bible* of 1611 has long and lasting influence for its clarity and beauty. The *New English Bible* comprises the *New Testament* (1961) and the *Old Testament and Apocrypha* (1970). The *Jerusalem Bible* was compiled by Catholic scholars in 1966. The *Good News Bible* is in modern colloquial English.

You may be a Catholic, but there is no need to stress the fact when you are in England. There had been bloody events in the English history with regard to the conflict between the people and the country with Roman Catholic authorities. Mary I, for instance, had killed many Protestants that people name her Bloody Mary.

And Bloody Mary is an English drink made from Vodka, tomato juice, seasonings and lemon juice. The latter two ingredients make it feminine, the tomato juice is the blood of the martyrs she killed, and vodka makes you forget the whole thing.

A *moss* is either a boggy ground, moorland or a peat bog, the last one of which preserves organic objects. Thus a man fallen into a peat bog thousands of years ago still retains his skin, hair and facial expression.

A *muir* or *mure* is either a moor or rough cultivated heathery land which was considered as part of an estate used for gun sports.

Rhynie chert is a siliceous rock from Aberdeen shire that contains fossils of some of the earliest plants.

A *recumbent* is a variant of stone circle found only in the northeastern part of Scotland, the largest block of which is laid on its edge at the south of the circle. Stone circles were used for ritual activities.

It is getting dark and I want to walk to the natural reserve on the estuary just north of Aberdeen, so I walk to the Castle beach first and from there along a dark promenade below the road level.

It is a memorable walk in a nearly pitch-dark path, with the sounds of the sea to your right and occasional faint sound of an unseen car upwards and to your left. I must have walked a few miles but still have not reached the estuary. At one point I had to go up to the road in order to cross a bridge.

I decide to turn back for fear that I would miss my coach.

At the coach station before boarding the coach at 7 pm to return to Glasgow I eat, then brush my teeth and rinse my mouth with a little water from my small water bottle. From Glasgow to Manchester is the usual Service 336.

Saturday 2nd November 2002, again from Manchester to Glasgow at 1.30 am, for I love Scotland.

Dundee was a Victorian industrial town famous for its three J's, that is to say, jam, jute and journalism. For centuries it had experienced attacks and plunders, and has been completely destroyed four times but each time rose again from its ashes like the phoenix. People of Dundee are called Dundonian.

I visit the museum. There are on display here musical instruments. These includes an 1814 player-piano made by Longman & Company, a 1798 square-piano by John Broadwood and a 1798 upright piano by William Southwell.

There are also a bellowed pipe from Ireland, a 1761 spinet by Baker Harris and a 1771 harpsichord made by Jacob Kirkmann, a tambura from India, a zither, an Irish harp and a sarinda from India.

The keyed cittern, a variant of Greek kithara dated from about 1750.

The Czechoslovakian houslaka is a variant of the fiddle that is laid flat on a table for playing.

The Florentine mosaic, also known as pietre dure, is a technique of making a decorative panel by using inlaid pieces of semi-precious hard stone.

The French Palissy ware is named after Bernard Palissy (c.1510–1590) who was a naturalist with particular interest in reptiles. He made casts of reptiles and attached them to plates, then painted them with lead glazes which ran into one another during the firing process.

Majolica is an Italian tin-glazed earthenware, a coarse ceramic fired at a low temperature which makes it remain porous after firing and have to be glazed to prevent it from absorbing moisture.

On display here at the museum is an Italian cantagalli majolica, Cantagalli being the name of a firm near Florence during late nineteenth century.

There are also Deruta ware, Istoriato ware where the entire plate is decorated with lively scene from history, mythology, the Bible or daily life.

There is a Bellarmine jug dated from about 1653. This is a type of Rhenish stoneware jug, named after Cardinal Roberto Bellamine (1542–1621), with a moulded mask of a bearded man on its neck.

There is a nineteenth-century stoneware tankard with coloured enamel of figures from the Bible.

There is also a silver nef which is an example of model ships which adorned rich man's table from the thirteenth century.

Electrotypes and electroplating are techniques invented during 1840s. It has been used to reproduce from masterpieces the historical metal works. A mould is put in a tank containing solution of copper salt, then electric current is applied which makes the copper deposit on to the mould.

Sèvres Porcelain Factory is the French National Porcelain factory founded in 1738. It created the Empire style in ceramics, which is the late Neo-Classic

style associated with the tastes of Napolean I.

There are stained glass works by William Morris & Co. from the nineteenth century.

A double-bladed dagger which is in effect two daggers connected to each other at an obtuse angle. The fist shield is used for parrying.

The blade of the talwar or sabre could vary greatly in quality, curvature and size. It is the commonest fighting sword used in India.

Kris is Malay in origin and is used both for fighting and for fencing.

There is a special exhibition of shoes, I think of works by a Dundonian James McIntosh Patrick (1907–1998). There is a variety of shoes, for instance wooden paduka, rawhide sandal, thick leather chappal sandal, mules, 19^{th}-century fibre sandal from Japan, raffia sandals from 19^{th}-century China, Japanese Geta, brogue, Pakistani majori, women's Golden Lotus slippers from late 19^{th}-century Han Chinese.

Paduka is a toe knob sandal. Clogs are Dutch, wooden and huge. Then there are platform shoes.

There is an exhibition called 'Shoe' by Kathy Fawcett and team from Leicester and at Dundee's McManus Gallerie there is one by Jenny Stolzenberg whose work represents shoes from Holocaust victims.

I have myself seen a hill of shoes on display at Auschwitz, so I know what it feels like to be standing before such a sight.

She puts it, 'I couldn't move my lips to talk, or my arms to wipe away the tears. I could only look'.

'I imagined that if each owner of each pair of shoes could be named, then they would be brought back to life,' she writes, 'You should go to the past, looking not for messages or warnings, but simply to be humbled'.

Men are wonderful creatures. Our philosophies are derived from blood, our love from fear.

Jute is used to make rope like the manilla rope and hessian sackcloth.

The heyday of the jute industry here was before World War I. During 1860–1960 jute defined Dundee, and in 1901 nearly half of the working population worked in textiles.

'Twa for a shillin', three for a Boab,' it was said in the Green Market.

Until late in the 19^{th} century bathing was usually done in a bedroom or dressing room using a portable bath and hot water provided by servants. A fire was sometimes lit for comfort. Very few houses were built with bathroom, even large mansions at Camperdown House had none.

Houses in the city back then have *pletties*, which are platforms providing

access to the flats on each floor.

The *greenie pole* carried a number of lines, each one of which is strung from an individual flat and on which you hang clothes out to dry.

Here the Scots, or Scotti as they were called by the Romans, came from Ireland 1,100 years ago. They spoke Gaelic and called themselves Gaels.

Then 900 years ago came the Normans among the relics of whose are a motte and bailey castle.

Before the Scots came there were the Picts who were descendants of the people who built hillforts and souterrains. The Romans called them Picti, perhaps meaning painted people or people of the designs. That was 1,700 years ago and no Pictish documents survive.

Souterrains are long, curving, underground passages built during the last century BC and the first century AD. Probably used to store foods or to house animals, they are normally found when there is also evidence of houses built on the surface.

Hillfort settlements built after 800 BC had wall of stones, earth and timber. To make the surface level a layer of turf was placed on top.

Log boat or skin boat is made such that it resembles a shell of log with a big groove running the whole length and opening at one end. This end is then fitted with a stern board which closes the opening. Such boats are as wide as the logs themselves.

From these an extended log boat was developed in which planks were added to the sides of a log boat, thus increasing its capacity. These eventually became a wooden vessel with the traditional pattern based on a long wooden keel.

The real-size model of the Douglasmuir House looks similar to those prehistoric houses found in Japan where there is a ring ditch, no chimney, thatch for roof resting on rafters supported by ring beams which rest on top of posts.

The Balfarg henge monument at Glenrothes, Fife, dates back to 2,500 years BC.

Middens are refuse heaps. They contain the remains of deer, wild cattle, shell fish and fish. The first camp of the Morton Middens was built before 6,000 BC.

South of Dundee is the Mill Observatory built on a hill. The 37-inches Schmidt Cassegrain is the largest one ever built.

The colours of the trees on the hill are wonderful.

It was the idea of the Dundonian philosopher Thomas Dick, that every city should have a public observatory.

Mills Observatory was built in 1935. Named after John Mills (1806–89), it

is the only public observatory in UK. The telescopes were built by Grubb Parsons of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, namely the 18″Grubb reflector (1935–50), the 19″Schmidt Cassegrain (1950–52) and the 10″Cooke refractor (1952–present) which dates back to 1871.

It is getting dark when I walk back to Dundee. By the sea there is on display the Royal Research Ship 'Discovery' on which Captain Scott went on his Antarctic expedition. It was built in 1901 when Scott was 33 years old, and returned to Dundee in 1986.

Some notable Dundonians not already mentioned are Williamina Paton Fleming, Robert Graham, Thomas Henderson, James Bowman Lindsay, Malcolm Longair, George Lowdon and Patrick Stevenson.

James Chalmers invented the adhesive postage stamp, Janet Keillor the marmalade while James Bowman Lindsay pioneered electric light and telegraphy.

On display are minerals related to meteorites, for example tektites and moldavites from river Moldau in the former Czechoslovakia, Australites, and Indochinites from the plain of Japs and Laos.

From Dundee to Glasgow by the 20.25 Service 592 and form there onwards to Manchester at 11 pm by Service 336 is uneventful. While waiting for a coach in Glasgow I usually walk around in circle in the vicinity of the station, eat and brush my teeth.

Friday 8$^{\text{th}}$ November 2002, at five past midnight on Service 422 to London and then on Service 020 at 7 am from there to Canterbury.

What a day it was Yesterday! I went to the Main Building and met two of my past teachers, Martin and John, both of whom I have not met for such a long time. They used to teach me back in 1994 and 1995 at the master level.

Then I went to see Muriel who asked me, 'What's the problem?', to which I said, 'No problems!'. I must have been somewhat problemsome.

I only wanted to have a letter to tell Singapore Airlines that I am finishing my degree and about to go home, and therefore need some extra weight allowance for my luggage.

I shall come to learn that more often this does not help. The written weight limit is an absurd 25 kg. By asking beforehand for an increased allowance they will make double-sure that yours never exceed 35 kg, whereas otherwise you could often carry as much as 50 kg with you.

Similarly if you ask for fragile labels to be put on your luggage, they usually make you sign a form waiving any responsibility if a damage occurs to the things inside your bags.

The coach station in Canterbury is small and sits near the city wall, a park and pedestrian area of the town. There is Mark and Spencer but then again

there are Mark and Spencer's wherever you go.

The West Gate incorporates battered plinths to the circular towers which are now almost buried in the wide road bridge, portcullis, a draw bridge, heavy gates, battlements and machiolations–murder holes–above the gate.

There are eighteen gunloops or 'gunholes', the earliest recorded in Britain. Guns were placed at Westgate by 1404.

The museum and gallery are in the same building together with a public library. People are already standing in front of front door twenty minutes before the appointed opening hour.

I try the door and find out that it is locked. Turning back I suddenly find myself being looked down by all the people standing in the queue, so embarrassed I go for a walk along the streets and canals before coming back to the museum.

The Canterbury Cathedral usually has an Evensong at 5.30 pm except on Saturday when it is at 3.15 pm, but the main service which comprises the compline and Eucharist are at 11 am. Apart from these services and prayers, the Church is open to the tourists for a fee.

At the gallery there are paintings by Cooper who paints animals. His running horses, however, conform to the contemporary believe then that galloping horses stretch mid-air with all four feet above the ground. That was the time before moving animals had been photographed.

Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904) devised a way of photographing movement in consecutive steps which allows us to see how horses really look when galloping. His books, for example *Animal Locomotion* published in 1837, shows that all four feet of a horse are only off the ground together when they are closest not farthest apart. This discovery of his has changed the way prancing ponies are painted.

The name 'Riding Gate' is an Old English name which means 'red gate'. It was built during AD 270 –76 as one of the six principal gates. The gate was destroyed in 1782.

Both Thatcher and Blair are great coiners of phrases alike. For example the former once said, 'He puts his integrity before his ambition', while the latter used to say before his first successful prime-ministerial election that we need not only to pursue a policy of 'tea for two' but also to make sure there will be 'two for tea'.

And, well, this is not Kiwi for this is Kent, but now I know that the accents of people in these two places are similar to each other. As far as I am concerned Kent accent is the same as Kiwi accent.

I go back to London in the evening, and from there on to Manchester at 10.30 pm on Service 540 from Victoria coach station.

Wednesday 13th November 2002, what a day indeed! This is not my day.

Last night I went to a job presentation by Logica at Malmaison Hotel. The company has merged with another one recently and is tightening its belt. Good food and wine were served and I came back and fell asleep in front of a computer in B9 and missed my coach at 1.30 am by 25 minutes.

So Aviemore is out of the question. What a pity, the weather is very nice today.

But I got on the 336 Penzance coach at 3.45 am to go to Birmingham. This coach came one hour late. Why couldn't the one to Glasgow do some thing similar?

I buy a ticket for Portree and hope that the weather will not be too bad on Saturday. From Birmingham to London the coach arrives one hour and a half late. From London I go to Bath. The coach from Birmingham to London was the 8.00 Service 420 and from London to Bath Spa the 12.30 Service 403.

It is much easier to go to Bath from London than to go there from, say, Bristol. For one thing, there is no National Express coaches from the latter there.

The town is 106 miles west of London. Industries include tourism, plastics and printing. On this site used to be the Roman town Aquae Sulis which means 'water of Sul', the British goddess of wisdom. It boasts the only natural hot mineral springs in Britain and in the 18th century flourished for its spa. The baths were closed to the public in 1977.

The University of Bath was established in 1966. It was here that William Herschel discovered Uranus.

Bath Abbey was built in 1499 to the style of Perpendicular Gothic on the site of a Saxon abbey that was founded in 775 and in which in 973 Edgar was crowned the first king of all England.

Jane Austen (1775–1817) lived here from 1801 to 1809, and there is here a society named after her, the Jane Austen Foundation.

All the buildings in Bath were built around this time when people moved here following the believe that water from the geothermal spring here could cure diseases.

Bath is famous for the splendour of its Georgian architecture examples of which are the Royal Crescent and the Circus. These buildings are built from golden yellow stone, the Bath stone, according to the planning laid out for the town.

The Romans built bathing facilities here because of the geothermal springs. After they were gone the town decreased in its importance until the rush due to the medicinal property of the water from the springs mentioned.

I walk to a market and then the river where there is a sunken park. But it is already dark and the park's gate is closed. I buy a litre of lemonade and some cooked turkey from Waitrose in the Podium on Northgate Street.

Bath is situated in a valley, isolated from the world outside. At night there are no lights on the hills surrounding it, and apart from those lights from the city itself everywhere is darkness.

I return to London at 6.30 pm when it is already pitch dark. Before getting on the coach I had some trouble finding the coach station. Then from London to Manchester it is by the 11.30 pm Service 422.

Saturday 16th November 2002, go to Glasgow on the 1.30 am Service 336, then change at 7 am into Service 916 to go to Portree.

From Portree to Inverness there is a Service 917, but I shall have to do it some other time with a Scottish Rail Pass, that is Citylink's Explorer Pass.

The name of Portree in Gaelic is Portrigh. It is on the Isle of Skye.

We pass Glen Cloe just before reaching Fort William. There is the same Safeway again because the coach stops here for fifteen minutes to change the driver.

The scenery after Fort William becomes more and more beautiful. Most of the time there are lakes. I change my seat from one side of the aisle to the other and back again several times just to have a look at each of the lakes, which at one time is on one side of the coach and at another on the other.

The coach stops at a bus stop on a small square. Nearby is a *Banca na h'alba* or the Bank of Scotland. It takes a few minutes to walk to the Tourist Information office, and a few more from there to the sea.

In Scottish the name of the town is Portrigh.

There is a pleasant walk on each side of the town along the sea, I was told. I choose the one to the north or on your left facing the bay, which is the closest one of the two. A paved path winds its way along the sea, then ends at a small ravine and follows it up the hill. I climb to nearly as high as the path could go.

The way ahead must lead eventually back towards Portree, but it seems to go further away from the town so I turn back and return the same way I came. And it is well that I do, for I could barely reach there ten minutes before my coach leaves at 3.20 pm for Glasgow. I shop at a Safeway along the way.

At Fort William the coach stops for half an hour beside another, bigger Safeway. As usual I buy something here again, and so does everybody.

It is always Roddy who drives between Portree and Fort William. The route is a very scenic one, but since he must be driving most days I am not

sure whether he enjoys it.

Here another driver takes over the coach to drive us back to Glasgow.

Tuesday 19th November 2002, today is a trip to Aviemore, a sports and tourist centre in the Highland. It is 28 miles southeast of Inverness and lies adjacent to the Cairngorm Mountains.

Again I travel from Manchester to Glasgow's Buchanan coach station. This time I change my coach at Buchanan to go to Aviemore by the 7.15 Service 592 which goes all the way to Inverness.

Aviemore is a small town and our coach passes it easily in no time that I do not even notice it is there. By the time I know I have missed my stop we are already approaching Inverness.

There is a random checking of tickets, obviously because one passenger has bought a ticket to go to Aviemore but did not get off there. No one asks to see my ticket, however, but when I ask the driver whether we have already passed Aviemore he exclaims, 'So you are the one!'

In no time I find myself on a new coach, altogether another service to the one I came by, heading for my destination.

This time coming from Inverness it is very easy to find since it is the first place we stop.

The coach stops here in front of a police station, and I walk further along the road passing a supermarket, a hotel and some shops to come to the tourist information centre.

There are Lairig Ghru and Glen Einich in the vicinity. There are wonderful walks around two lakes that are connected to each other by a small stream.

Here, close to where the lakes connect I sit and have some bread with Marmite. There is nothing like eating Marmite sandwiches in a cold and cloudy day with a pine forest behind you and in front you a large lake. Then I walk around the smaller one of the lakes where the path often passes along or on a marsh.

There are water plants and reeds. At one place the whole bay is a swamp on which the path is paved. The way back passes a plain where there are also tracks for riding horse.

I met one elderly couple twice. Once just before reaching the first lake and again on the way back when it is almost dark. They probably stay at a hotel on the large plot of ground to the right of the path the lanterns in the garden of which give a wonderful sight at night.

Back on the main road and already dark there is nothing much to do. So I follow the road some way and then come back. I find the Youth Hostel nearby. There is a path next to it which leads to a nature reserve.

I sit on a lawn by the road to have some more sandwiches and watch the valley in the dark.

The moon is in the sky but it is often hidden behind the cloud.

I buy bananas, chocolate cake, pesto pasta, salad dressing and shortbread at a Tesco nearly one hour before the coach to Glasgow arrives at 6.58 pm from Inverness.

Tesco is a supermarket chain that was founded by Jack Cohen (1898–1979) in 1931 in London. The name comes from his name and the name of his supplier, T E S Stockwell. By 1998 it had 160,000 staffs and 600 stores.

Manchester to Edinburgh, Sunday 24$^{\text{th}}$ November. The Service 336 coach stops as usual at Glasgow, after which it passes along Loch Lomond and for a long while keeps that lake on its right before turns into a motorway.

Dawn comes when we reach the lake, and the scenery there at that hour is splendid.

It is the largest freshwater lake in the country, 21 miles long and with the area of 27 square miles. It is situated in the Strathclyde region and is linked to the Clyde estuary. It is set in dramatic mountain scenery, and is being watched over by the 3,192 ft Ben Lomond standing nearby. Loch Lomond often appears in romantic traditional songs where lovers lamenting lost love recall memories of happy time spent with their lovers on its banks.

Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland while Glasgow its principal city. It sits near the southern shore of the Firth of Forth. Among the industries here are printing, distilling, brewing and banking. In the vicinity of the city are Water of Leith, Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat.

During the Roman occupation in the first century BC a pre-Celtic tribe occupied northern Scotland and successfully resisted the Romans' effort to conquer them. The latter called them *Picts* which probably means painted or tattooed.

These people are thought to have inhabited much of England before the Celtic Britons arrived. They spoke a Celtic language which died out in about the 10$^{\text{th}}$ century.

During the fifth and the sixth centuries the Britons, English and Scots established themselves in the country and repelled the Picts to the north.

St Columba (521–597), an Irish Christian abbot who founded monasteries and churches in Ireland, came to Scotland in 563 as a missionary. Together with 12 companions he sailed to Iona, an island in the Inner Hebrides, and founded a monastery there which later played a leading part in the conversion of Britain. The feast day for St Columba is 9 June.

Castle Rock in Edinburgh was already inhabited during Bronze and Iron Age. In about 617 the site was taken by Edwin of the Angles of Northumbria

who built the fortress of Din Eidin from the name of which the present name of the city is derived. In 843 the Scottish King Kenneth MacAlpin reigned over both the Scots and the Picts.

During 1005–1034 Malcolm II realised the unification of Scotland. Robert the Bruce (1274–1329, reigned 1306–29) made Edinburgh the capital in 1325 and a burgh in 1329. He also established its port at Leith. The city was destroyed by the English in 1544 and 1547.

Amazingly for the capital of a country there is no coach stations whatever, and all coaches stop at bus stances on St Andrew Square.

I cross over the train terminal on North Bridge and then turn left on to High Street and walk along the Royal Mile until I reach the medieval John Knox House.

It was built in 1556 and bears the inscription,

'LYFE·GOD·ABVFE·AL·AND·YI·NYCHTBOVR–AS·YI·SELF'.

It was the home of James Mossman who was the Goldsmith to Mary Queen of Scots (1542–1587).

I walk on and then turn right towards Arthur's Seat. There are construction works going on all over Edinburgh. At one of these sites near the Palace of Holyrood house are wall boards put up all around with a poem from *The Brus* (1374–75) by John Barbour (*c.*1320–1395) written on it in large letters,

A! Fredome is a noble thing
Fredome mays man to haiff liking;
Fredome all solace to man giffis,
he levys at ese that frely levys!

There have been two queens of England whose name is Mary, namely Mary I (1516–1558) or Bloody Mary and Mary II (1662–1694).

Mary I was a devout Catholic who in 1554 married Philip II of Spain and sanctioned the persecution of Protestants. She was Queen of England from 1553.

Mary II was Queen of England, Ireland and Scotland from 1688. She married in 1677 her cousin William of Orange.

Queen Mary (1867–1953) was a queen but no Queen of England. She was the consort of George V of Great Britain and Ireland, to whom she married in 1893 after his brother and her fiancé Prince Albert Victor died in 1892.

Mary Queen of Scots was a Catholic who married three times, two of which were to the dauphin who later became Francis II and to her cousin the Earl of Darnley in 1565.

Mary Rose, however, is not a person but the name of an English warship built for Henry VIII of England. On 19 July 1545 it sank off Southsea causing the loss of nearly all of the 700 on board. Located in 1971 the wreck was raised for preservation then moved in 1982 to Portsmouth where she was built.

Unlike in USA where roads are cut straight in rectangular grids, streets in most old towns in the UK seem to be designed in order to make it difficult for strangers to find his way around. Whether this was done on purpose for security reason one never knows.

Among the intellects of the city are Adam Smith (1723–1790) who wrote *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and is said to have founded political economy, David Hume (1711–1776) whose *Treatise of Human Nature* is the core of British empiricism, and Joseph Black (1728–1799) who discovered carbon dioxide and the bicarbonates, hydrogen carbonates.

James Hutton (1726–1797) demonstrated how the rocks of Salisbury Crags had been formed from hot molten material through the theory he developed in 1785 on the igneous origin of many rocks.

Known as the *founder of geology*, he formulated the uniformitarianism concept which says that past events can be explained in terms of processes that work today. Thus the dolerite sill of the Salisbury Crags was formerly molten rock. The Hutton's Section of the sill has been greatly reduced by quarrying.

Arthur's Seat is a hill of volcanic origin to the east of Edinburgh. It is at Latitude 55° 56′ 43″.8 N, Longitude 3° 9′ 38″.3 W at the height of 250.5 m. It forms the core of Holyrood Park and can be approached from various directions the easiest way of which is from Dunsappie Loch to the south.

From here one can see the Mouth of the Forth, Lammermuirs and Pentlands. Craigowl (455 m) is at a distance 67.6 km away while Inchkeith Lighthouse (56 m) at 10.1 km.

I climb up to the top of Arthur's Seat by the steps and a road that runs along side the cliff. It is a fine day and there are quite a few people walking. The path I follow leads eventually to a lake where there are many ducks, seats and paved paths.

Then I climb up the hill again, walk along the various paths some of which are very pleasant, and follow the edge of a gentle slope which ends in steep cliffs that drop spectacularly to the roads below.

These cliffs represent a cross-section of a stack of slabs of the rocks underlying the hill, and therefore are jagged and uneven all over.

I must have branched off on to a wrong path at some point, for I suddenly find myself confronted with a shear drop of turfed moist ground. Instead of turning back I scramble down the slippery slope, and as a result get both of my hands and my trousers soiled with a reasonable amount of excitement.

I walk back to town. At a corner of a crossroad stands a museum which used to be a church.

Tron Kirk was built on top of buildings of Marlin's Wynt II. Around 1600 the city's population increased, thus resulting in extensive caves below. It was designed by John Mylne under the commission of Charles I of Britain.

But Charles was beheaded before the Kirk was completed. During the Covenanting revolution, civil war and Cromwell's occupation of Edinburgh the construction work was slowed down. It was open for worship in 1647 and finally completed in 1663.

The Great Fire of Edinburgh in 1824 spread along Royal Mile and into Cowgate. The Blaze burned for three days, inspiring James Braidwood to start Britain's first municipal fire department.

In 1828 Tron steeple was rebuilt and the church was closed for worship in 1952. Here people come and celebrate the Hogmanay, Scottish name for New Year's Eve.

The Old Town is shaped like a bottle with Royal Mile running down the length of it in the middle. Along this street are the old Parliament House (1632–40), now the seat of the supreme courts, and St Giles' Cathedral. Both are on the Parliament Close, built in late Gothic style and renovated between 1772 and 1883.

Closes are narrow lanes which descend in regular rows from the main street, usually less than 7 feet wide at the entrance. Those which a carriage could pass through are called *wynds*.

The new site for the new Scottish Parliament is adjacent to Holyrood House on the Royal Mile.

The National Library of Scotland and the Edinburgh Public Library are on the George IV Bridge.

After the Act of Union which resulted in the Union of England and Scotland in 1707 the Jacobites rebelled unsuccessfully in 1715 and again in 1745 when they took the town from 15 September to 31 October but could not take the castle.

George IV visited the city in 1822, the first sovereign to do so since 1650. At the suggestion of Walter Scott he wore a kilt, and in so doing won much popularity.

There are three universities in Edinburgh. The University of Edinburgh was established in 1583, the Hariot-Watt University in 1885 and received the university status in 1966, and Napier University.

Both the Royal Scottish Academy and the National Gallery of Scotland are designed by William Henry Playfair (1789–1857) in Classical style.

The Museum of Scotland was opened next to the Royal Museum in 1998, making them two among the various National Museums of Scotland. It looks formidable on the outside but is beautifully well-organised inside. It has several floors each of which is divided into sections. At the entrance of one of the sections on the ground floor there is written on the wall words from John Barbour's *The Brus*.

> For we fight not for glory, nor riches, nor honours, but for freedom alone, which no good man gives up except with his life.
>
> *Declaration of Arbroath*, 1320

One of the items on display here is a gold coronation ampulla dated 1633. It was used for holding the sacred anointing oil.

The Maiden was a beheading machine that for 145 years had done service a job which could have become messy if carried out by an axe.

There are the basket-hilted broadsword and the two-handed Lowland sword with clam shell guards, both dated from the 16^{th} century.

For tormenting there are the steel thumbscrews, manacles with chains and branks with iron gag which have a steel plate projecting on top of the tongue and were used for those suspected of being witches.

There is a Peden's mask, worn by preachers in the 17^{th} century. These masks are named after Alexander Peden who preached illegally because Charles II in 1662 declared himself head of the Scottish Church. They are made of leather and have holes for the eyes, nostrils and mouth.

The Coigrich is a silver gilt crozier shrine.

Arbroath is a town in Angus, on the east coast of Scotland, 16 miles north-east of Dundee. It lies at the mouth of Brothock Water. On 26 April 1320 the Declaration of Arbroath was signed by the Scottish Parliament in Arbroath Abbey. Probably written by Bernard de Linton, it proclaims their loyalty to King Robert I (The Bruce) and Scotland's independence from England and from the Pope.

> Quia quamdiu Centum ex nobis viri remanserit, nuncquam Anglorum dominio aliquatenus volumus subiugari.

which means

> As long as only one hundred of us remain alive we will never on any conditions be brought under the English rule.

There is an iron caltrop found at Bannockburn. It is a piece of iron with four-pronged spikes, used to injure cavalry. The four prongs form a tetrahedron structure. They meet each other at the centre of the tetrahedron. The

lines joining the tips of these prongs together form sides. Thus there are six sides to each caltrop.

There are a leather tawse for belting children, a *New Crown Jewel* mangle for pressing linen and *The Capital* washboard; a pair of snuffers that come with handles like those of scissors, a chamber candlestick and snuffer, and a wax jack and snuffer; knives with pistol-, canon- and baluster grips; Toddy ladle with whalebone handle, a pair of wire-work toast racks, tea urn, an epergne which is put in the centre of a formal dinner setting for displaying fruits and various delicacies, tankards, a Monteith, and a scallop shell basket for holding bread or cake.

Among renowned Scots are John Logie Baird (b. Helensburgh, 1888; d. Bexhill, Sussex, 1946) who pioneered television; Alexander Graham Bell (b. Edinburgh, 1847; d. Baddeck, Canada, 1922) who invented the telephone in 1876 and a wireless transmission using selenium crystals in a photophone; William Murdoch (1754–1839) who worked for Watt and Matthew Boulton on steam engines and developed gas lighting; William Symington (1763–1831) who in 1787 invented the steam road locomotive, in 1788 steamboat engine and in 1802 the steamboat Charlotte Dundas; Sir William Thomson (Lord Kelvin; b. 1824 in Belfast; d. 1907 in Netherhall, Strathclyde) who developed the theory of gas and who said, 'I never satisfy myself until I can make a mechanical model of a thing. If I can make a mechanical model I can understand it'; James Watt (b. Greenock, 1736; d. Heathfield, near Birmingham, 1819) who made Newcomen's engine more efficient by separating the condenser from the piston cylinder and a double-acting, *parallel motion* machine that supplies power in both direction.

During the 18^{th} and the 19^{th} centuries many people were leaving Scotland. On the southeastern coast of the middle island of Aotearoa or New Zealand a town was proposed by George Renuie who wanted to help the destitute and unemployed. Dunedin was founded in 1848 and by 1870 had become the largest town in New Zealand. Rev. Donald W. Stuart was the first minister of the Knox Church there. The city retains Scottish identity and its devotion to Robert Burn.

Peat, yeast and alcohol mature in oak for at least three years before it can be legally called *whisky*. It is usually aged for 4 to 12 years in wooden casks. The 5-10 per cent alcohol which comes from the sugary mixture and yeast in the Washback is fed to a big pot shaped like a flask, which is then heated.

Alcohol boils easier than water and its evaporated phase is fed into the Worm, a spiralling copper pipe bathed in cold running water inside a column. It takes eight hours for all the vapour to condense.

The Worm is a condenser which converts gaseous alcohol into liquid. The spirit leaving it goes to the Spirit Safe.

You call the American or Irish *whiskey* with an *e*, but the Canadian or

Scotch *whisky* without one.

Scotch whisky is made from malted barley, Irish whiskey usually from barley, and bourbon and North American whiskey from maize and rye.

There are between 600 and 800 different flavour compounds in whisky. These are mainly alcohols, aldehydes, esters and fatty acids.

In Scotch whisky barley is malted and then heated over a peat fire. The drying with peat gives the malt a distinctive flavour compared with other types of whisky or whiskey. The product is mixed with water to make a mash, fermented into beer, distilled twice to make whiskey at 70 per cent alcohol, and then added with water until its alcoholic content is 43 per cent by volume.

For Irish whiskey the malt is not heat by the peat fire, and therefore has no smoky quality. It is distilled three times. Both the Irish and the Scotch whiskies are usually blended. Pure malt whisky is expensive.

American whiskey began in the 18^{th} century. Here barley malt, maize and rye are made into a beer, distilled to 80 per cent alcohol, reduced with water to 50-52 per cent, and the aged in charred white-oak barrels.

Bourbon has a characteristic flavour of maize.

Canadian whisky is made since early 19^{th} century from mashes of malted barley, maize, wheat and rye.

Straight whisky contains whiskies of the same distillery or period, while blended whisky is a mixture of neutral products with straight whiskies and may contain sherry, fruit juice and other flavours.

The alcoholic contents by volume of the spirit safe is measured using a hydrometer.

Bubbles arise after 40-60 hours of fermentation when all sugar turns into alcohol.

There is on display a model of the SS Nerbudda, the first rotary printing press made by the printer Thomas Nelson in 1850. Exhibited at the Great Exhibition London, 1851, it could print 10,000 double sized printer sheets per hour, but the quality was not good enough for book printing.

Here is a big hall the ground floor of which is a large open space showing exhibitions of computer games, while the first floor where I am now braces itself with the walls on all four sides, leaving a hole in the middle, which makes itself look like a ring or balconies from where you can see the exhibition space below.

The balcony on this side has all the models of the ships and boats. There are, for example models of a reed raft, a log raft, an Inuit kayaks from Greenland and an Irish west coast curragh.

The Ojibwa Indian canoes from Canada, dated to earlier than 1875, is educating to see. It is made by gathering up each of the two shorter ends of a rectangular piece of leather or hind together and seal it. Then put several ribs in to keep the boat in shape and you have a stylish, streamlined canoe.

There are models of an outrigger canoe from Gilbert Island, an Egyptian ship *c.*1500 BC, and a round Gufa from Bagdhad.

This last item is interesting. It is made of spirals of reed ropes. The outer surface is pitched. There is neither head nor tail, and it can be rowed on any side.

The model of a Greek trieme dates back to *c.*300 BC while that of a Roman grain ship with its triangular top sails and the bowsprit sail *c.*200 AD.

The Chinese sea-going junk has flat sails. The mat sails fixed to top and bottom booms are stiffened by battens.

Now the sailing ships look grander and grander, from the Portuguese Carrack to the Scottish Merchant ship. The last one is a full-rigged ship with its 3-masted square sails on all masts. It usually has triangular staysails before the masts and a gaffsail on the mizzen mast.

The largest wingspan and one of the most magnificent of all birds is the wandering albatross, *Diomedea exulans*, family *Diomedeidae.* Its wingspan can reach 3.6 metres.

There are on display stuffed Lammergeier, *Gypaetus barbatus*, *fam. Accipitridae*, aka bearded vulture which digests bones completely in two days; the kiwi, *fam. Apterygidae*, the eggs of which each weighs 25 per cent of the female's weight; the edible-nest swiftlet found in Daiï, Vietnam, Indonesia and Java, *Aerodramus fuciphagus*, *fam. Apodidae*, which uses saliva to the extreme; Luth or leathery turtle, *Dermochelys coriacea (Vandelli)*, found in tropical and sub tropical oceans; Anaconda, *Eunectes murinus (Linnaeus)*, from tropical South America, called 'bull-killer' it gives a live birth; and Indian python, *Python molurus (Linnaeus).*

With the door of the museum closing behind me, I walk to the Princes Street and then along it. This is one of the two thoroughfares in Edinburgh, the other one being the Royal Mile.

Then I explore the streets and roads of the New Town. There is a theatre with high glass walls. It is quite cold walking the streets here at this time of the year. Luckily I have not long to wait, for the coach leaves at 9.30 pm to Manchester.

The Order of the Thistle is an ancient Scottish Order of Chivalry. With the initials KT and a green ribbon it was created in 1687. Its motto is '*nemo me impune lacessit*', which means 'no one provokes me with impunity'. Only 16 people may hold this order at one time.

Before the unification, monarchs in Scotland include Donald II and Malcolm I (943–954).

The Scottish monarchs since the unification of Scotland to the union of crowns when James VI of Scotland became James I of England are shown in the following. Starting from the *Celtic Kings* we have in 1005–34 Malcolm II (*c.*954–1034), 1034–40 Duncan I (d. 1040) the Gracious, 1040–57 Macbeth (*c.*1005–1057), 1057–93 Malcolm III (*c.*1031–1093) Canmore, 1093–94 Donald III (*c.*1039–*c.*1100) Donalbane or Bane *i.e.*'fair', 1094 Duncan II, 1094–1107 Edgar (1097–1107), 1107–24 Alexander I (*c.*1078–1124) the Fierce, 1124–53 David I (1084–1153), 1153–65 Malcolm IV (1141–1165) the Maiden, 1165–1214 William (1143–1214) the Lion, 1214–49 Alexander II (1198–1249) the Peaceful, 1249–86 Alexander III (1241–1286), and 1286–90 Margaret (1283–1290) the Maid of Norway.

Then comes the *English Domination* during 1292–96 by John de Baliol (*c.*1249–1315) and during 1296–1306 the throne was annexed to England.

The *House of Bruce* has during 1306–29 Robert I (1274–1329) the Bruce and during 1329–71 David II (1324–1371).

The *House of Stuart* comprises in 1371–90 Robert II (1316–1390), 1390–1406 Robert III (*c.*1340–1406), 1406–37 James I (1394–1437), 1437–60 James II (1430–1460), 1460–88 James III (1451–1488), 1488–1513 James IV (1473–1513), 1513–42 James V (1512–1542), 1542–67 Mary (1542–1587) Mary Queen of Scots or Mary Stuart, and 1567–1625 James VI (1566–1625) which covers the union of the crowns in 1603.

Scotland the Brave is the song the tune of which I have heard since I was 16 going on 17. I was in New Zealand then. We had a bagpipe band, and they played this tune while they marched on the Australia-New Zealand Army Corps on Monday 25$^{\text{th}}$ April 1983 day to the monument in downtown Ashburton.

Hark here the night is falling
Hark hear the pipes a calling
Loudly and proudly calling down thru the glen
There here the blood a leaping
High as the spirits of the old highland men

Towering in gallant fame
Scotland my mountain hame
High may your proud standards gloriously wave
Land of my high endeavour
Land of the shining river
Land of my heart forever, Scotland the Brave

High in the misty mountains
Out by the purple highlands

Brave are the hearts that beat beneath Scottish skies
Wild are the winds to meet you
Staunch are the friends that greet you
Kind as the love that shines fro fair maidens eyes.

With this my Scottish spirit rises and I would not rest until the *Flower of Scotland* is here. It is the Scottish National Anthem.

Although modern, this anthem commemorates the Battle of

Bannockburn in 1314 when the Scottish Army under Robert (I) the

Bruce King of Scots defeated Edward II, King of England.

O Flower of Scotland, When will we see Your like again
That fought and died for, Your wee bit Hill and Glen...

The Hills are bare now, and Autumn leaves lie thick and still
O'er land that is lost now, Which those so dearly held...

Those days are past now, And in the past they must remain
But we can still rise now, And be the nation again...

Flower of Scotland, When will we see Your like again
That fought and died for, Your wee bit Hill and Glen
And stood against him, Proud Edward's Army
And sent him homeward, Tae think again.

Among the words originating in Scots are *wee, bonnie, glamour* and *raid.*

It is amazing how teachings of most of the religions and philosophies I know seem to me not merely similar but exactly the same. One may begin by looking at Christianity, Islam and Judaism, all of which has only one and the same God.

In Judaism you pray directly to God, and likewise in Islam. That is to say, you reach God by no one except yourself.

In Christianity the situation is somewhat more complicated. Here there is no single bible but two bibles, that is the Old and the New Testaments, the theme of the former being Fear whereas that of the latter Love.

In the Old Testament one may reach directly this God that one regards with fear, thus the term *god-fearing people.*

What Jesus teaches us in the New Testament amounts mainly to, 'No one comes to My Father except through Me'. If one only takes away the quotation marks, then His *Me* and *My* become conversely the reader's *my* and *me.*

Whether one is aware of it or not, this technique of a *Reader's Me* is by no means unusual in Literature. It is an enormously effective technique which

may provide a good explanation to many other things, for example the saying, 'You are what you read', and why written words are usually more convincing than spoken ones.

In a way, God is our consciousness or subconsciousness.

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (John, 12: 49,50)

Not only does God create us, but he is here with us, everywhere and within us. One must hold true to one's faith and and believe in one's self.

And yet if I judge, my judgement is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. (John, 8: 16)

When I pray, I talk to God in my own mind. You do not talk to God together as a crowd but individually. In prayers lies the strength of our thought which others have no access to. They have a similar thing of their own.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. (Matthew, 6: 6)

Jesus died, but he dies not. He lives always in us who believe in him. And since he is in his Father, similarly I am also in my Father, I who believe in Him.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. (John, 14: 19, 20)

If you believe in God, you also believe in Jesus, you also believe in yourself.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (John, 14: 1)

And as soon as we believe in Jesus's words, every *me* he uses becomes our *me*, that is it means each one of us to ourselves alone.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John, 14: 6)

In *Bhagavad Gītā* the king Arajuna hears voices from a god telling him first to do his duty and then to *follow no one but Me*. Following the same line of the above argument, I reason that this *Me* is not the *speaker*, that is the god, but the *listener*, that is Arajuna himself.

Our hearing is in fact our repeating things we hear to ourselves.

A German, following the same line of thinking but looking at things from another angle, says, '*Wie soll ich wissen, was ich sage, bevor ich höre, was*

ich rede', that is to say, 'How could know what I say before I hear what I speak'.

Buddha's teaching is exactly the same with the teaching of all the above religions, except that he puts it in a much simpler and straight-forward manner, 'No one comes to the Truth except through himself'.

Amen or *Sạdhu*, whichever.

And *quod erat demonstrandum.*

For our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrew, 12: 29)

For the proof and explanation of this I refer to the cosmological theory of Big Bang, B^2FH †, and the *Worlds in Collision* (1950) by Immanuel Velikovsky.

The sunken garden at Piccadilly is now raised, redesigned and turned into a modern garden with an attractive forest of fountains where children run among spouting sprouts of water in the heat of summer.

The Manchester Infirmary used to stand on this site which was demolished in 1909, the cheap solution after the demolition of which was the sunken garden, one of the homes of the homeless.

It was in this newly-built Infirmary that Ann Lee, born to a blacksmith and his wife in 1736 on Toad Lane which is now Todd Street, worked as a cook. She was illiterate, but formed the sect Shaker which broke away from the Quakers in Bolton and fled to America in 1774 where she became *Ann the Word.* The Shakers or the Society of Friends is a Christian Protestant sect founded by George Fox (1624–1691) in England in the 17^{th} century. Fox became a travelling preacher in 1647, and was imprisoned for blasphemy at Derby in 1650 when he suggested Judge Bennet to *quake at the word of the Lord*, and in so doing has secured for his sect the name Quakers which has become rather derogatory. It has had a profound influence on American life through their pacifism, belief in education, social quality and prison reform.

Stories of cities are the story of percolation. Cities are clusters which have grown out of villages and towns, and they meet and join each other to become a bigger conurbation of clusters. Then, when they degrade and shrink, they seem to be drawn away from certain lines representable by edges or bonds in a network.

As time goes by, the area around these lines becomes more dangerous and less populated. The different parts of the city seem to be shrinking each towards its own nucleus. In the end these nuclei become safe havens, oases, or forts surrounded by desolate land, and one by one they die like a candle

† E Margaret Burbridge, G R Burbridge, William A Fowler, and F Hoyle. Synthesis of the elements in stars. *Review of Modern Physics.* v. 29, no. 4, Oct. 1957.

snuffed out.

Manchester in 1774 was an old, compact market town surrounded by market gardens. In 1824 before the arrival of the industrial revolution, rich people still lived in the centre and the poor on the edge.

In 1830s the city centre became unbearable and the former moved out to the suburbs of Whalley Range and Victoria Park.

From then on until 1870s the population of the city doubled every ten years, when H. G. Wells described it as a 'great swirling mass of humanity'. It became at the same time *the most wonderful city of modern time* and a place of deprivation and squalor.

From 1920s the city had shrunk until the event in 1996 after which it started to grow again at an amazing rate.

From Manchester to Penzance the coach goes again at 3.45 am on Thursday 28th November 2002.

I have no troubles with coaches nowadays, I quite like them. In fact they have become my home.

The ride from Manchester to Cornwall is uneventful. The coach stops at various places along the way to drop off passengers and pick up new ones, but we only get off and walk around at Birmingham, Bristol, Plymouth and another small town where the Cornish air is so refreshing.

Last night on the coach before we reached Birmingham a youngster said to his friend, 'Oi! Stevie!', he was slightly drunk.

He talked in a voice audible to everyone on the coach, not unpleasantly but in a drawn-out manner and entirely rubbish.

They wanted to get off at a certain place along the way, but the driver said 'No!', they are going to reach a coach station in a few minutes' time, to which the same said to him, 'You are tight, aren't you?', which I feel is a covered insult since addressed to a man it has a homosexual nuance.

He either got off in, or slightly before Birmingham when the coach stopped and did nothing, which I thought was strange. I slept and awoke on and off.

Cornwall is shaped like a finger with its tip at the Land's End pointing towards the Isles of Scilly or Scillies some 24 miles away. Most parts of the Scilly Islands belong to the Crown.

The Cornish language was spoken here until 1777, the tin mined from the Bronze Age until 1998 when the last mine at South Crofty was closed following the collapse of the world's tin price in the 1980s.

While Land's End is the westmost, the Lizard Point in The Lizard is the southmost point of England. The former is 9 miles from Penzance whereas the latter 11 miles from Helston.

At Land's End there is a granite cliff 59 feet high, while at Lizard Point the headland is of greenish serpentine rock.

The South West Coast Path is perhaps the easiest one to follow among all the National Trails in England and Wales. You just keep the sea on one side and follow the acorn way-marks.

The other paths are the Cleveland Way, the Cotswold Way, the Glyndwrs Way, the Hadrian's Wall Path, the North Down Way, the Offa's Dyke Path, the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path, the Pembrokeshire Coast Path, the Pennine Way, the Pennine Bridleway, the Ridgeway, the South Downs Way, the Thames Path, the Wolds Way.

Interesting websites include `www.ordsvy.gov.uk`, `www.swcp.org.uk` and `www.westcountrynow.com`.

The reflective studs you see on the roads are cat's eyes that are invented in 1934 by Percy Shaw (1890–1976). Each one of these has two pairs of prisms which reflect the light from the headlamps back to the driver. The stud moves down into a case underground when the wheel rolls over it, and whenever it does its eyes are wiped clean.

We arrive at Penzance in the afternoon. I try to walk to St Michael's Mount but it is too far away. It gets dark by the time I am half way there, so I return in order not to miss my coach.

At 8.30 pm I get on Service 404 bound for London's Victoria. The following day I take Service 032 at 9 am from London to Winchester.

Today is 29$^{\text{th}}$ November 2002 I arrive here in Winchester from London.

The ruin site of Wolvesey Castle had inhabitants since Saxon time or even before. The area on both sides of River Itchen was all marshy ground once, and wolves used to roam here freely and in plenty. The name *Wolvesey* means the *Isles of Wolves*.

The castle seen in ruins today was built by Bishop de Blois. It was destroyed by the puritans during the Civil War. The ruins lie next to playing field of Pilgrims School.

Winchester once had at least six gates, namely one for each of the four directions, Durngate and Kingsgate. Among all these only the Kingsgate and the Westgate remain.

There is a church over the Kingsgate called St Swinthun-upon-Kingsgate which has been there since the 13$^{\text{th}}$ century at the latest. In the Middle Ages there were many churches above city gates, but few remain to this day.

The Westgate has been repaired many times. Its central arch dates from the reign of King Henry III in the 13$^{\text{th}}$ century. There is a museum above the gate and above it the roof from where you can look over the city. Both the parapet and overhanging machicolations on top of it are now gone.

Standing within yards of Kingsgate is the Prior's Gate which leads from St Swithun's Street into the Cathedral Close. It was originally built as a main gate into the Close. Above the gate is a tiny Church of St Swithun.

Over the course of history kings and queens were crowned, lived and died or buried here. There are past monarch in the ground of the Winchester cathedral than in Westminster Abbey.

The Anglo Saxon Chronicle and the Domesday Book were both written here.

The Royal Oak Inn, built in 1630, has beneath it a subterranean bar that could date back to the Saxon time.

Butter Cross is a city cross which dates back to at least mid 14^{th} century and used to be called the High Cross. It seems to sit snugly in a corner with buildings immediately on two of its sides, and strangely so too, since it could easily have looked out of place there otherwise. It was painted by Turner and later restored by Sir Gilbert Scott who based the restoration on an old engraving in 1865. At one time butter and eggs used to be sold on the steps at its base.

The Winchester Cathedral is built in a mixture of styles from Early Norman to Late Gothic. It was remodelled under William of Wykeham from Norman-Romanesque to Perpendicular Gothic. Construction of the Norman Cathedral began in 1079 by Bishop Walkelin.

Jane Austen was buried here. Also buried here in 1683 was Izaac Walton (1593–1683) who in 1653 wrote *The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation*, an autobiography and philosophical study in the form of a dialogue between an angler, a fowler and a hunter.

The various sections of it were built in different times, and some of the plans were abandoned. By contrast other cathedrals are usually built in one style only, for example Salisbury Cathedral.

The best way to go to St Catherine's Hill from Winchester is to go past the ruins of Wolvesey Castle to the Cith Mill, walk across River Itchen to the other side, then follow the left branch of the river, walking along a footpath that runs more or less along the left side of it until reaching a park where there is another path branching to the left that leads uphill. The areas are in general water-meadows.

City Bridge crosses over the River Itchen. Close to it and standing astride the River is the City Mill which for centuries has been a water-mill. Owned by the Abbey of Wherwell, it was passed on to the citizen of Winchester following the Dissolution of the Monasteries during the time of Henry VIII.

It was rebuilt in 1744 after the mill had fallen in ruins, this time it grounded corn for the citizens. It retired from active life around 1900, then given to the National Trust and let to the Youth Hostels Association.

The first bridge on this site was said to be built by St Swithun (852–863).

Winchester was an old capital of England. There are no coach stations here. All coaches stop on the roadside, just past the statue of King Ælfred, erected by Hamo Thorneycroft in 1901, to drop off and pick up passengers. Ælfred (*circa* 849–901, King 871–899) drove the Danes from Wessex.

In the museum there is the leech jar. During the 18^{th} and the 19^{th} centuries leeches were used for blood letting. The jar is a big ceremic jar the top of which is perforated to let in the air.

Carboys are large, round glass bottles. The plaque years of the 17^{th} century requires immediate recognition of an apothecary's house, and a carboy containing coloured water is placed in pharmacies to make them easier to recognise.

Towards the end of the 12^{th} century, that is in 1180s, the treasury and exchequer moved to London.

The word *exchequer* comes from the Norman-French *eschequier*. It is the name given to the king's court of revenue because the accounts was calculated on a chequered cloth around which the officers sat. The sums of money received by the treasurer were with counters scored on the squares of this cloth, which resembles a chessboard, the process of which suggests a game of chess. Jettons were placed on an exchequer board or cloth which is used like an abacus.

The office of the chancellor of Exchequer was established under Henry III (1207–1272) and originally involved keeping the Exchequer seal.

The chancellor is responsible for national finance and economic policy. He usually resides at 11 Downing Street while the prime minister at 10 Downing Street.

But the present prime minister Tony Blair and the chancellor Gordon Brown both lives in each other's official residence, that is to say, the former at 11 and the latter at 10. The number 11 house is said to be more spacious.

Tony Anthony Charles Lynton Blair was born in 1953. He makes a distinction between *academic* and *ethical* socialism, distance his party from its socialist base to promote *social market* value.

Venta belgarum mosaic is made from small cubes or tiles placed on top of a mortar layer which in turn rests on compacted layers of stones.

In Roman time a Central-South School of mosaic workshops are based in Winchester, Chichester or perhaps Silchester. Venta Winchesta, Calleva Silchester and Levcomagus are close to one another, the lines connecting the three of which form a triangle.

Used for making the mosaic are chopped bricks or tiles which give the

red, orange, yellow tesserae. Limestone or chalk fragments give white and cream. Purbeck limestone gives a blue-grey hue, shale a black-grey one, and limestones and sandstones brown, green, grey and purple.

Roman's wealthy man's houses enjoy under-floor heating by hypocausts where heated air flows in passages or chambers beneath the raised, tiled floor.

In AD 410 Emperor Honorius ended the control of Britannia from Rome.

The primitive people who lived here makes walls of wattle and daub.

Auroch is a primitive ox and *torcs* twisted neckrings.

During 2100–1200 BC burials took place in round barrows, surrounded by a ring of ditch and in the centre of which is the burial pit. These barrows are usually associated with the Wessex culture (2000–1500 BC), and belong mainly to the Bronze Age. Long burial mounds dates from Neolithic period, that is the New Stone Age, while round ones from the Mesolithic period, the early Bronze Age.

Barrows are normally made of earth. Those entirely made of stones are known as cairns. Barrows dated from the Roman time have a steep and conical outline, and often contain graves of wealthy merchants.

Around 1500 BC inhumations were replaced by cremation burial. The cremated remains were put in a pot, placed in open cemeteries close to the living places.

In front of a long barrow mound are two tapering rows of poles which lead towards the entrance. There is only one small entrance, and this leads into a chamber of wood or stone slabs in which is placed the dead body.

Winchester employs three types of recycling bins, namely those for green glass only, those for clean glass only, and those for brown glass only.

The city was known in Roman time as Venta Belgarum, a route-centre and a capital of a district. It became the capital of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex in 519. It was the seat of government under Alfred the Great (Ælfred, *c*.849–*c*.901) and Canute.

Egbert was crowned the first king of all England here in 827. Together with London it was declared capital of England under William the Conqueror (c 1027–1087) who was crowned in the Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1066.

King Alfred founded the first English navy and in 1086 William I compiled the invaluable Domesday Book here.

The River Itchen on which Winchester situates is no river but an artificial channel made by the Roman around AD 70 to prevent flood and provide a defensive eastern moat. In Medieval time it was almost twice as wide as its width today of 5 metres.

I walk to St Catherine's Hill on the top of which there is a plateau where there used to be a community. The plateau is only open on one side, and thus facilitates defence should this become necessary.

There is a trace of a maze in square shape. It is thought to have been made sometime during the Victorian Period, but the new outlines were probably built on top of what used to be even older than this.

I walk along the border of the place on the outside and could notice nothing which shows that there is a plateau very close by. It is only that I expect some kind of a hilltop or another in that direction, that I decide to climb up the mound which stretches along the right-hand side of the path.

Then, 'Lo! and Behold!', I could hardly believe my eyes. Stretched out before me is another world, separated from the rest of the world below but for a single slope to one side.

A dog barks at me from afar, roughly from where the maze must be.

It is already getting dark, so I walk around quickly and then climb down the same way I came up. After this I go down a flight of steps, walk to a bridge and then follow the river or canal back to town.

Darkness sets in while I am walking along the canal. It gets dark very early in winter. If you want to travel, the best time is in summer when it gets dark sometimes as late as 10 pm.

The mismaze on St Catherine's Hill was built before the 17^{th} century, and is similar in structure to the game of nine men's morris.

Three thousand years ago St Catherine's Hill was a settlement. During the 3^{rd} century BC a fort was constructed here. Between 100 BC and 50 BC Winchester was founded and people were drawn to the valley.

The 12^{th} century Norman Chapel on its summit is dedicated to St Catherine. The chapel was demolished following the dissolution of the monasteries, and the hill passed to the ownership of Winchester College.

On my way to the hill someone had set up a big tent in the park or reserve area just before you got on to the path that goes upwards towards the hill-top. After these steps the path meets another one where you must decide whether to turn to the right or to the left. I guess these two paths are parts of the same ring that circles the outer rim of the plateau. If this is so, you could be walking round and round in circle without getting anywhere closer to the hill top!

Once the outskirt of Winchester is reached I try to go to the Winchester Cathedral again, but find the roads and the signs so confusing that I lose my way several times.

I do manage to find my way in the end, but there is already no need to go to the Cathedral at this hour when it is already pitch-dark. I buy some food

and a can of baked beans from a supermarket, and eat the beans out of the can.

The three important landmarks here are the Satatue by Hamo, the Cathedral and the Westgate, the last one of which has just given me the bearings.

Beans are nourishing and rich in protein. At nine pence for a can of 420 g, baked beans are perhaps the cheapest food you can get in the UK. Because they are cooked, they presumably have lost most of, if not all the vitamins.

No nations on earth make beans that taste as good and are as rich in nutrients as Japan. The Japanese *nattou* or fermented beans is a highly controversial food. Similar to Marmite, one either loves or hates it.

I bought the food at Sainsbury's on Middlebrook Street at 5.52 pm. I remember having shopped earlier at 4.11 pm at Iceland on the same street.

Sainsbury's was founded in 1869 by John James Sainsbury (1844–1928), a grocer who started his business as one dairy shop in Drury Lane, London. It is now the largest supermarket chain in Britain.

My favourite spot around Winchester is the St Catherine's Hill; my favourite place within the city is the Butter Cross. A fine example of a city cross it stands immediately in front of a timber-framed house, staring at the latter in the face.

I like to climb up to the top of the steps at its base and sit there watching people going about their business below. Sitting here you are more or less above the line of sight of people on the street. It gives you strangely a privacy in the midst of the crowd. No wonder it is often used as a meeting place.

I think there is an admission charge to see the Stonehenge!

I leave Winchester for London on Service 035 at 8.25 pm. By that time it was already dark and I had walked around for a few hours. Everywhere is decorated with lights, for Christmas is coming.

Behind the bus stop where the coaches stop is a park which has behind it a canal by the side of which is an open structure with a semi-circular roof. In the dark it is lit with electric light. A group of youths are there talking and playing with one another and the guitar. All the unlit parts of the garden are bathed in the moonlight.

Looking across the moonlit garden and paths to the lighted house beside the canal, and listening to the laughing young voices amidst the surrounding silence.

True, it sounds even to me like a summer. Young people are always reluctant to let their happy time go.

From London to Manchester I go by Service 422, leaving at 11.30 pm.

Succeeding King Ethelred, King Alfred reigns 871–899.

The *West Saxon Kings* of England are in 899–924 Edward the Elder (*c.*870–924), 924–39 Athelstan (*c.*895–939), 939–46 Edmund I (921–946), 946–55 Edred, 955–59 Edwy, 959–75 Edgar (944–975) the Peaceful, 975–78 Edward the Martyr (*c.*963–978), 978–1016 Ethelred II (968–1016) the Unready, and 1016 Edmund II (*c.*989–1016) Ironside. Then comes the *Danish Kings* 1016–35 Canute (*c.*995–1035), 1035–40 Harold I (1016–1040) Harefoot, and 1040–42 Hardicanute (*c.*1019–1042).

The *West Saxon Kings* restored in 1042–66 Edward the Confessor (*c.*1003–1066), and 1066 Harold II (*c.*1020–1066).

The *Norman Kings* 1066–87 William I (*c.*1027–1087) the Conqueror, 1087–1100 William II (*c.*1056–1100) Rufus, 1100–35 Henry I (1068–1135), and 1135–54 Stephen (*c.*1097–1154).

The *House of Plantagenet* 1154–89 Henry II (1133–1189), 1189–99 Richard I (1157–1199) the Lion-Heart, 1199–1216 John (1167–1216) Lackland, 1216–72 Henry III (1207–1272), 1272–1307 Edward I (1239–1307), 1307–27 Edward II (1284–1327), 1327–77 Edward III (1312–1377), and 1377–99 Richard II (1367–1400).

The *House of Lancaster* 1399–1413 Henry IV (1367–1413), 1413–22 Henry V (1387–1422), 1422–61 and 1470–71 Henry VI (1421–1471), 1461–70 and 1471–83 Edward IV (1442–1483), 1483 Edward V (1470–1483), and 1483–85 Richard III (1452–1485) Richard of Bordeaux.

The *House of Tudor* in 1485 –1509 Henry VII (1457–1509), 1509–47 Henry VIII (1491–1547), 1547–53 Edward VI (1537–1553), 1553–58 Mary I (1516–1558) Blood Mary, and 1558–1603 Elizabeth I (1533–1603).

The *House of Stuart* 1603–25 James I (1566–1625), 1625–49 Charles I (1600–1649), 1649–60 the Commonwealth, 1660–85 Charles II (1630–1685), 1685–88 James II (1633–1701), 1688–1702 William III (1650–1702) of Orange and Mary II (1662–1694), and 1702–14 Anne (1665–1714).

The *House of Hanover* 1714–27 George I (1660–1727), 1727–60 George II (1683–1760), 1760–1820 George III (1738–1820), 1820–30 George IV (1762 – 1830), 1830–37 William IV (1765–1837), and 1837–1901 Victoria (1819–1901).

The *House of Saxe-Coburg* in 1901–10 Edward VII (1841–1910).

And now the *House of Windsor* 1910–36 George V (1865–1936), 1936 Edward VIII (1894–1972), 1936–52 George VI (1895–1952), and from 1952 Elizabeth II (b. 1926).

The Commonwealth is the Republican rule by Parliament during 1649–53 and 1659 –60. During 1653–59 Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658) ruled as Lord Protector.

Saturday 30th November 2002, I must have read from somewhere the phrase *global gobbledygook* I have noted down in my notes. I think I must have come

across it while reading some newspaper on the world politics. Similarly so must have I the following two words, minion and hooch.

Boy Scouts was founded by Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powel (1857–1941) in 1908 as the Scout Association. He began the Scout movement in 1907 with a camp for 20 boys in Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour. Together with his sister Agnes (1858–1945) he founded the Girl Guides in 1910.

There are four branches of Scouts, namely the Beaver Scouts for boys aged 6–8, Cub Scouts for 8–10.5, Scouts for 10.5–15.5, and Venture Scouts for 15.5–20.

In 1976 girls were admitted to the Venture Scouts, and in 1991 to the other branches.

Whenever I have no time to go by the coach, the buses become my home. For this I buy weekly tickets. What I normally buy are the Stagecoach Manchester's Megariders, one of which I use from 17$^{\text{th}}$ to 23$^{\text{rd}}$ December 2002.

But today I buy myself the First's Network, which lets you go anywhere within the Greater Manchester. It costs £10. First has another kind of weekly ticket which can only be used in the city centre. I think it costs £7 or less, but I have never bought one.

Stagecoach's control covers the whole of the city centre, Stockport and the airport. Through the bus 356 it also connects you with Hayfield where the Kinderscout is in the Peak District.

For the rest of the Greater Manchester you are better off buying a First's ticket, especially so Bolton and Bury where they reign.

Today I buy my first such ticket, Firstweek, which lasts from 3$^{\text{rd}}$ to 9$^{\text{th}}$ December. Stagecoach has increased the price of their Megarider from £7 to £7.50.

Pilkingtons ceramic tiles are on display at the Bury Art Gallery.

Unlike the new City Art Gallery in Manchester, the paintings here have no glass covering on them and therefore look better.

There is Brylcreem, also a brand name of the hair-oil for men which is well-known in Daiï when I was there and young.

The bulls-eye oil lamps were used by the police from 1840s until WWI when they were replaced by electric torches lamps attached to the policeman's belt. Back then the smoke from the oil burner of the lamp often blackened the face of its wearer. This is probably one reason why navy blue was chosen as the standard colour for police tunics, so that stains from the lamp would not as easily show up.

The lamp is cylindrical in shape, has a conical cap, and is equipped with rings behind it for the belt to thread through. In front and on its body there

is a circular glass two inches in diameter for light to pass through. The one on display here belongs to the Lancashire Constabulary.

Bury is the birth place of the modern police force. Robert Peel (1788–1850, b. 6 February at Chamber Hall, Lancashire) established a police force while he acted as a home secretary during 1822–27 and 1828–30. As a Tory he entered Parliament in 1809. On 19 July 1829 was passed the Metropolitan Police Act.

Early policemen were known as *Peelers* or *Bobbies*, both of which directly come from his name.

He reformed the Tories under the name of Conservative Party on the basis of accepting changes and seeking supports from middle class.

Sir Robert Peel, the Second Baronet, was Prime Minister of Great Britain and the UK during 1834–35.

Everywhere is decorated with lights. The same huge Christmas tree stands tall in front of the Town Hall at the same place where year after year it has stood. Fresh and jolly atmosphere is in every place. Christ is going to be born again before long, in the mind of the people, so soon since last year when he did the same thing, which makes the whole year but a wink.

Thursday 5$^{\text{th}}$ December 2002, percolation is the change of phases.

When people's believes and thoughts turn into philosophy, that is also a change of phase. But do we see things as percolate because of the philosophy we have in our head, or do we have the philosophies in our head because our ideas percolates?

Or, indeed, both?

To put it plainer, 'Is it philosophy which causes percolation or is it percolation which causes philosophy?'

What a nice day is this! The Bolton Market is really alive. I think the market is on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Policemen parked their trailer between here and the bus station. On the side of the trailer is written, 'Hawk' with a picture of the same, it is a Victim Support. A few people stop and talk with them.

Bolton is a nice and cozy town. It has a fine museum and art gallery.

I find a Poundstretcher shop five minutes' walk from the station where they sell delicious instant beef noodles at 79 pence for a pack of five.

The Poundstretcher's sell a number of their goods for one pound, and thus the shop's name. Another chain of shops similar to them in this respect is the Pound Empire which, among other things, sell stationery and kitchen wares.

Before 1914 the pound was issued as a gold sovereign and as a note during 1914–83. It has become a coin since 1983.

The inscription on the coin's edge in 1983 is *Decus et tutamen*, 'Ornament and safeguard'.

The 1984 Scottish pound has as its inscription *Nemo me impune lacessit*, 'No one injures me with impunity'.

And on the edge of the 1985 Welsh pound it is written *Pleidiol wyf i'm gwlad*, 'True am I to my country'.

Monday 9th December, I have cut myself badly across the palm of my right hand trying to put a drawer of the locker back after it has come off.

Something had dropped behind the far end of it, into the space inaccessible to the hand from the outside, so I need to take the whole thing off the grooves. This I did but found that I could not put it back in again. The stubborn thing refused to fit in, but instead cut across my palm a wound one inch long and quite deep. Through the gaping wound I can see the muscles underneath the layers of skin, so there will probably be a scar afterwards.

With the water from the tap in B9 I wash the wound for a while, then dry and put a sticking-plaster on top of it. I feel like fainting, so I lie down on top of a table near one of the windows which open to the west.

A security staff came on his round to check whether I am working, and whether I have my student card and out-of-hour permit with me. I get up from the table to greet him, and apologise to him saying that I know you are not supposed to sleep here during the night, and I have never slept here during the night if I could help it.

'I have cut myself a wound this wide in my palm,' I say, showing him my right hand with the sticking-plaster and put close to it the thumb and the middle finger of my left hand two inches apart to give him an idea of the extend of the wound underneath. Then I reduce the gap between these two fingers to an inch and a half to be more realistic.

Some of the things you need to exaggerate, otherwise they would look smaller than they actually are. An example of this is a statue which, if it seems life-size, is never less than one and a half times the size of the real person. And if you put a live-size statue of someone up on a raised base, it hardly looks half the actual size of his self.

'Ooo!', exclaims Richard with the face as though he is in pain.

'I think I'm going to die', I continue.

He smiles, so I say, 'I am afraid of tetanus'.

It is well past midnight, very early in the morning.

The wound heals so quickly it amazes me.

I think it is in that part of the palm you call the ball of the thumb or *thenar eminence*. It stops bleeding in no time, and looks a mere straight line when

I change the sticking-plaster at dawn. It could be that our palms cope with wound better than the other parts of our body.

Together with the trace of dried blood along it, my hand looks like that of someone who has just been taken down from the cross after having been crucified.

Tuesday 10th December 2002, to Portree a second time. From Manchester at 1.30 am to Glasgow by coach and there I change at the Buchanan bus station at seven in the morning.

In Portree I walk to the Aros Centre where there is a pine forest, a visitor centre, a restaurant and a shop. There is the alphabetic trail here that teaches one Gaelic by writing the names of the trees in that language for each alphabetical character. The trail passes behind the visitor centre from one side of it to another.

I could not find names for all letters of the alphabet, only some of them. I guess that these are all, and the remaining letters have no plant names associated with them.

On the way here there were students walking to their school which I passed by later.

In the Gaelic Alphabet Trail, *Aibisidh nan Craobh*, trees are used as an aid for teaching the alphabet of the Gaelic language to children. The trail is a short walk behind the 'House in the Forest', *Tigh na Coille*. I only manage to find trees for the following letters: *A*ilm, Elm; *B*eith, Silver Birch; *C*oll, Hazel; *D*arach, Oak; *E*adha, Aspen; *F*earn, Alder; *G*ort, Ivy; *I*ubhar, Yew; *L*uis, Rowan; *M*uin, wayfaring tree; *N*uin, Ash; *O*nn, gorse; *R*uis, Elder; *U*ath, Hawthorn.

In the forests there are several tracks criss-crossing one another. From no places can you see the sea except at one point where the trees are not as dense. There is a wooden bench and table here, so I sit to eat some bread and Marmite.

The pine trees are grown so dense, and they have twigs that weave together like a net or a filter that should effectively prevent any bird from flying down from above to the ground inside the forest. The trunks of these trees stand straight and tall.

On the ground it is warm and there is less light.

Trees can grow in the midst of winter because they live in the earth underneath. Their trunks and other parts we see are only sticking up in the air to get the sunlight. Forests are like lichen or moss, and each tree a part of it.

Pine forests are like hairs upon the skin of the earth. I imagine myself a lice walking on the skin of a huge animal with dense hair covering this part of its body.

Fish live in the water, trees in the earth. Both men and birds live in the air. The only difference is that the latter lives in a three-dimensional space whereas the former in two.

With the trees this dense the warm air created by their metabolism is kept inside the forest, so it is warmer here than it is outside.

Soon I start to walk back towards Portree.

In the town there is a bay where a creek meets the sea. The bay looks dirty only because there are plenty of rock outcrops and seaweeds.

The fish and chips shop is closed and will open again in the evening. Someone at the Tourist Information Centre must have remembered me by now.

This is a town well connected with the rest of the kingdom by coaches but is infinitely remote from it, not in the matter of distance alone, which is by no means much, but because it seems a tranquil fishing village, far from the madding crowd.

The sun rises and sets here daily as it does in Manchester. But here it does so with Nature. This is its home as no other places are, certainly not in any cities.

In Manchester the sun is but another source of light, albeit a unique one. Here it is one with the nature, a source of life, and it shines.

Portree specialises in the making of woollens.

From here to Glasgow the coach leaves early at 3.20 pm.

This is, after all, the Isle of Skye in the Highland. There is in Portree written on a local bus or coach parking beside ours, 'Highland. driving Scotland forward'.

From the Buchanan in Glasgow to Manchester the coach leaves at 11 pm.

Skye is the largest island of the Inner Hebrides. It is in the Highland region, off the west coast of Scotland. The Sound of Sleat and the islands of Raasay and Scalpay lie between it and the mainland.

The Skye Bridge connects Kyleakin on this side with with Kyle of Lochalsh on the mainland. It is a toll bridge, and is privately financed. It was opened in 1995, and as the result the Calmac ferry service was closed. Coaches to Skye pass through both the bridge and both of these towns.

From a brochure given by Aros is written, '*Thig crìoch air an t-saoghal, ach mairidh gaol agus ceòl*', 'The world will come to an end but love and music will endure'. There is also the following riddle,

Theid i null air a' chuan
Thig i nall air a' chuan;
Innsidh i naidheachd,

Agus chan abair i guth.

She will go across the ocean,
She will return over the ocean;
She will tell a tale,
And not utter a word.

And the answer to this riddle is a pen.

The Portree Forest in Gaelic is *Coille Phortrigh.*

Thar lochan fala clann nan daoine,
thar breoiteachd blair is stri an aonaich,
thar bochdainn caithimh fiabhrais amhghair,
thar anacothrom encoir aineart anraidh,
thar truaighe eu-dochas gamhlas cuilbheart,
thar ciont is truaillidheachd;
gu furachair, gu treunmhor chithear
an Cuilithionn 'Se'g eirigh air bh eile duilghe.

Beyond the lochs of the blood of the children of men,
beyond the frailty of plain and the labour of the mountain,
beyond poverty, consumption, fever agony,
beyond hardship, wrong, tyranny, distress,
beyond misery, despair, hatred, treachery,
beyond guilt and defilement;
watchful, heroic, the Cuillin is seen
rising on the other side of sorrow.

Friday 13th December 2002, this time to go Uig. Again Service 336 at 1.30 am to Glasgow and then Service 916 at 7 am from there to Uig. The town is half an hour further from Portree or, if properly called, *Port Righ.*

Uig is a ferry terminal. There is nothing much here. It is higher in latitude than even Inverness, and Inverness must be a little higher than Portree.

There are more people on the coach this time, about ten, or in fact at one time fourteen.

From Glasgow to Uig there is snow on the grass and the hillsides. Water in the creeks is frozen.

Day breaks while we past Loch Lomond. The road winds itself along the loch for a while, then leaves it for Glencoe which by now seems very familiar to me.

The coach stops in front of a hotel somewhere, then it stops again in front of a small shop on the opposite side of the road of which is a lake of clean water.

There is there a wooden platform. Water in the lake slaps against the planks of this platform, inviting anyone to come and stand on it.

However, no coaches stop here for long. Normally there is just time enough for the driver to buy groceries he wants.

From here onwards the coach keeps either a lake or a firth on its left all the time while heading for, and until it enters, Fort William.

Here coaches stop for half an hour beside a Safeway. On the other side of the coach is a railway station.

From here one could see the snow on the mountains. Ben Nevis does not look the highest peak in Scotland from here. Along the way from here to the Isle of Skye there is snow in several places.

At Portree I stay on the coach this time, for five minutes and we are off again. From here to Uig the road goes inland and there is nothing spectacular to see.

At Uig the coach stops in front of a ferry office where some people get off to go to the toilets which are inside. Then we go on the pier to where the ferries are. After that the coach turns around, stops and will go no further. The driver has half an hour to eat and then we would go all the way back to Fort William again. I need to get off the vehicle and walk back to the ferry office where we were a few minutes ago.

There is a workshop where ferries are made. They are working on the hull of one. Nearby there is a large toilet for the disabled. There is a shop that makes and sells potteries made by hand. A brochure says you can watch one being made.

The sun is so close to the horizon all the time here in Scotland.

Uig is a very small town. Behind it there is a hill and opposite it, on the other side of the firth, a mountain. There are also some islands to be seen in the Loch Snizort on to which it looks.

Soon the coach comes around from the pier to the open space by the sea that is a road, a car park and a coach stop all in one. There are rail tracks on the ground, presumably because this is a port.

We leave Uig for Glasgow at 2.45 pm. The trip back is un eventful but exceedingly beautiful. Soon we reach Portree.

Then again from Portree we wind our way along the coast, up and down the hills. On the Skye Bridge, which is curved like a rainbow, to the left we can see islands and on the right the Loch Alsh and the mainland.

We descend from the bridge on to Kyle of Lochalsh, and from here pass through, hills, plains, valleys, lakes before we reach Fort William and finally Glasgow where I wait and then board the Service 336 for Manchester.

There are always drug dealers to be seen on busy streets and at coach stations in big cities, and Glasgow's Buchanan is no exception. Sometimes they do not even try to disguise themselves.

Sunday 15th December, I take a Service 422 coach from Manchester to London at five past midnight.

No two coach journeys are the same. Each and every trip has its own problems different from all the others.

This time I have found myself a window seat in the middle. On my right sits an Asian woman who comes with two girls who sit in the seats in the front part of the coach and on the right-hand side.

We have not left Manchester for long before an old man one seat behind us on the right-hand side of the aise suddenly pukes on his own dress. The woman who sits beside me calls out to the assistant staff whom we happen to have on our coach. He comes and offer the man some tissue papers, which the latter uses to wipe only his mouth and then sits there with his dress all wet from his own vomit.

The woman offers the man her water bottle. I would not have offered mine as readily, for certain.

Then we talk. Her name is Rena, and the two girls are her daughter, Margaret who is 19 and plays the violin, and Elizabeth who is 16 and plays the piano. Both are students at the Chetham School of Music. Until 1999 they had studied for four years at the St Andrew College in Christchurch, New Zealand. I have heard the name of the school when I was over there in Ashburton 19 years ago.

They are going back to Taiwan for Christmas, and have to find another coach at the Victoria Coach Station to take them to the Heathrow Airport.

At 6.30 am we arrive at the Victoria Station, and I help them find the right gate. After two months of travelling by coach, I know my way around here well enough to offer them my help.

My coach leaves at 10.30. It is Service 022 which will take me to Margate. After Margate it will go further to the last stop at Ramsgate.

I have long to wait for my coach, so I go out for a walk leaving Rena and her daughters waiting for their coach to come. They will be all right, I think to myself. They have been everywhere, there should not be a problem. I have told them to watch their belongings and not to leave any of them unattended. There is nothing more I can do now.

Margaret has her violin with her. She is a proud girl. She was born in the

UK. They emigrated to NZ for fear of China's aggressive policy.

I walk to the British Library on Euston Road. It is a big modern building.

You cannot walk the streets of London by sense alone. At least not before you have lived there long enough. These are no streets but paths through a maze. Even with maps I soon lose my way, not totally for I have only taken my eyes off the map a while ago, but enough to turn my well-planned path into a long detour.

I ask the staff at a hotel where we are on the map, and when he does I could not believe what he says.

But everything fits into their place soon in no time. Having learnt my lesson, I hereby stick my nose to the map and stop being pretentious.

What happened was that I had gone right around the Green Park to the Hyde Park. I should have gone straight through the narrow point between them at Hyde Park, that is at Grosvenor Place.

I now walk along the Oxford Street, then veer to the left following the street towards Euston Station.

Of course, the library is closed. I never expected it to be open at eight thirty in the morning. But at least I know now where it is. Reading room admission is by ticket only. Public area opens seven days a week, but the reading room does only six.

I walk back. Shops start to open on Oxford Street as I walk along. There are a few mini-supermarket. But things they sell are expensive, so I do not buy any food. It has been drizzling all along.

We are driving across a plain to Margate. On the coach it says, 'Ramsgate', so perhaps that is the coach's last stop.

Somebody had dropped a map of London at a pelican crossing on Oxford Street. I picked it up and hung it by the strap on my small rucksack. Then I washed it in a fountain inside Hyde Park. Now I dry it on the coach heater.

The heaters on a coach run along both sides of its body. Sometimes it becomes so hot it burns me. My left leg still carries a scar where it burnt.

Margate is in Kent, and the Kiwi accent is definitely Kentish. Both have exactly the same treatment of *a* and *i*. Now that 'eight' has found its proper pronunciation with the trailing *i*, 'today' becomes *todeiy* and 'David' *Deivid*.

There is no coach station in Margate. From our point of view, it is a town built around the esplanade through which coaches pass. At two of the bus stops, one on each side of the street, is a sign with a figure of a coach. It is here that you must wait for the coach.

The driver drops me off on the side of the road closer to the sea.

It has started to drizzle slightly. There is some wind blowing, and it is

cloudy. I carry on further on foot in the same direction as the coach's until I reach the pier. It is a stone wall on top of which you can walk, resembling a breakwater.

I walk the pier to the far end of it. The wind is still blowing quite strong. I put my cap on backwards to keep it from being blown away.

The air is so refreshing, so good after these long hours on the coach. I look up at the sea birds which cry as they fly past.

Margate is in the Isle of Thanet which is bounded by the North Sea at the Thames estuary and the rivers Stour and Wantsum, and was an island until the 16^{th} century.

From the pier I walk to the cliff which is nearby. There is on the beach there a small concrete platform with semi-circular stands made up of rows of seats in steps. There are shower outlets and paved places for people to lie down in the sun.

A long flight of steps climbs up to the top of the cliff. I take these steps and then walk down along the road towards the town. These Canterburian cliffs put an abrupt end to the land. Beyond it is the sea or rather the shore below. There are what look like outcrops of rocks next to the shore before the sea.

These outcrops are no rocks, however. On closer examination they are all white. The reason they look dark and blackish is only because they are covered by seaweeds. They are remnants of past reefs.

Kent is truly a fish and chips country. At one Fish'n Chips shop there is a special offer of Saithe fillet and chips for £1. Surely the price here for these is cheaper than at other places in the UK.

I see two Daiï restaurants here, one in the old town and the other one behind the promenade, in a street that branches off from it.

A take-away shop has somehow got their stove all in flames.

'Use a wet blanket! Put it on top!', I tell the two men who could not make up their minds what to do. But no one heeds my advice.

Wet towels are the best and easiest way for putting out flames on stoves. Water is of little use and could be dangerous, since these flames burn on oil which repels water. The oil readily separates itself from the water, and what is more, water never covers it.

If you find a piece of thick, strong water-absorbing cloth big enough to cover the flames, soak it thoroughly with water, and spread it on top of the flames, you can quickly and easily extinguish the fire because it has no supply of oxygen.

I did this once at the Samsi restaurant in Manchester where I used to

work, when our bullying chef stood by, helplessly watching at the flame he had himself started. After having tried all possible ways he could think of, for instance hitting it with various things and fanning it, the flame still remains like a phoenix.

I snatched up a towel, covered the flame with it, and 'Presto!' the flame was immediately finished. The towel I used then was not even wet. It has all to do with oxygen without which no earthly flames can exist.

In the Samsi's case, the fire wanted to consume the towel, but the towel prevented the oxygen from getting to it. Fires live on towels and oxygen. While the towel offered itself as a sacrifice, it also deprived its consumer of the essential ingredient for burning, oxygen. The flames could no sooner burn it with the heat they produced, than died for lack of air. It is a glutton suffocated by the food he eats.

There is a sweet shop at the promenade. Here I buy some fudges, one with three stripes, another with layer of chocolate and cocoa, and the other with lemon ice flavour.

Fudges are made from sugar and coconut.

The big man inside the sweet shop says it was not him who made these fudges. There are a great number and varieties of them, in pots, in jars, on shelves and in barrels or rather cylindrical plastic containers placed on the floor. He explains to me the differences among the ones I bought.

This area is under the Thanet District Council.

I walk around in the dampness of a recent rain. Standing on the beach in groups like penguins and sleeping are the sea gulls.

It is only 5 pm now but already dark. Even considering the cloud, we are doing better here than in Scotland where there are seven hours of daylight, that is from 9 am until 4 pm.

Because of the sea, promenades seem similar everywhere. The promenade here reminds me of the one in Blackpool. Both are similar in a way, but here there are much less exaggerations.

There is a sex shop here where things they sell are very dear.

I still find myself could not mew properly. This greatly bothers me. Whether it is from the ear problem I have or the effect of the medicine I took because of it, I do not know. But I do feel that there is something amiss because I used to be able to make a beautiful and resounding mew.

Then all, wit ails in heart and lungs,
In liver or spine,
Rushed here to be cured like tongues,
By dipping in the brine.

Margate was a pioneer in sea-bathing. Here Thomas Barber 1736 created the first commercial sea water bath in England.

The lamps placed on the waist-high fences which line the pedestrian paths have a beautifully casted figure of two sturgeon as their base. The restoration of these Victorian sturgeon lamp is funded by the EU commission.

At 5 pm I could have got on another coach to go to Ramsgate, but because the driver says there is no guarantee that I will be able to come back from there to Margate again to catch my coach to return to London, I do not go. Both trips, that is the one from Ramsgate here and the one from here to London, are on the same coach, but I have only a ticket to return to Victoria from here.

I return from Margate to London at 6.20 pm, and at 10.30 pm on Service 540 from there to Manchester.

Percolation is a theory of connections. When a network of something connects, one says that it percolates. The easiest way to see this is by imagining that you suspend something from above using a truss-like network of links.

If you take the links off randomly one by one until something drops, then we say that you have succeeded in making the weaknesses of the network percolate.

Similarly the strength of our network percolates when we take all its links away, and start to put them back one piece at a time. At the first instance when our object is connected to the fixing place above by some subset of the links, we say that the connection of the links has percolated.

Percolation does not have to occur in networks. In continuum percolation, for instance, two randomly placed objects connects when they touches each other.

One may put it another way and say that the continuum percolation is a percolation where the overall positions of the links are potluck instead of planned. Therefore the continuum percolation has no initial underlying networks.

By 2002 I have come to my own conclusion that the continuum percolation may underlie some of the percolation of networks. Each of the links of the networks may continually percolate first, and then a number of these links networkwise percolate.

I see languages as being connected to each other by their written language. I want to preserve the quaint languages of the world from dying, and for this purpose has begun to develop written language for them which is based on the same group of letters, namely the roman alphabet.

I am reasonably satisfied with my first attempt, an experimental application of the roman alphabet to the Daiï language, which results in a self-consistent

system that is a one-to-one mapping to the original system, and which is easy to use. I have completed the core part of this work towards the end of 2001. Below I use it to write in Daiï a poem by Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), *Mit Myrten und Rosen*,

Mit Myrten und Rosen, lieblich und hold,
mit duft'gen Zypressen und Flittergold,
möcht' ich zieren dies Buch wie 'nen Totenschrein,
und sargen meine Lieder hinein.

O könnt' ich die liebe sargen hinzu!
Auf dem Grabe der Liebe wächst Blümlein der Ruh',
da blüht es hervor, da pflückt man es ab,–
doch mir blüht's nur, wenn ich selbe im Grab.

Hier sind nun die Lieder, die einst so wild,
wie ein Lavastrom, der dem Ätna entquillt,
hervorgestürtzt aus dem tiefsten Gemüt,
und rings viel blitzende Funken versprüht!

Nun liegen sie stumm und totengleich,
nun starren sie kalt und nebelbleich,
doch aufs neu die alte Glut sie belebt,
wenn der Liebe Geist einst über sie schwebt.

Und es wird mir im Herzen viel Ahnung laut:
der Liebe Geist einst über sie taut;
einst kommt dies Buch in deine Hand,
du süßes Lieb im fernen Land.

Dann löst sich des Liedes Zauberbann,
die blaßen Buchstaben schaun dich an,
sie schauen dir flehend ins schöne Aug',
und flüstern mit Wehmut und Liebeshauch.

my own 1998 translation.

Ḍòaï Myrtle *lae Kulhạḅ, soaïngạm lae ăunvhạn,*
ḍ́òaï cypress dị̀ sngăngạm lae daung dị̀ rayiḅrayaḅ,
khà yăk toktặeng nhangsụe nān hài pen mhuan susạn,
lae kloḅfhang blẹngrāung khaung khà aovāi khàngnaị.

Ọ biang thà khà fhang gvạmrak khaung khà khàovāi naị nān ḍ́òaï ḍ́ài!
Ḅon lhumśob hăeng gvạmrak phli ḍ́aukmāi lekk̈ hăeng gvạm sngoḅ,
dị̀nàn man ḅĕngḅạn khùen, dị̀nàn gon kàụ ḍ́eḍ́ ao man pai,–
tặe khaung khà ca ḅạn kàụtặumụ̀a khà ẹng yữ naị lhumśob lặew dàonān.

Nị̀ pen bianggạ̀e ḅodblẹng, dị̀ grāngnhŭeng goeï guekganaung,

pranhŭeng dhạr lava, zùeng dòamkloḅ vẹdnạ,
bùng dalak aukmạ cạk viñyạṇ sŏan luekdị̀sud́,
lae sạd́ prakạï d́uc sạïfạ̄ fạd́ pai rauḅ d́ạ̀n!

Taunnī̤ man naun yŭ ngiabḭ̈ mhuan tạï lạ̄ew,
taunnī̤ man càungmaung yặng yen d́ạ̀n lae zịd́fạng,
tặe cạk gvạmprạthnạ naị ạd́ị̀t dị̀ phud́ khùen mạ mhăị man kàụ tŭentọa khùen,
mụ̀a viñyạṇ hặeng gvạmrak khào grauḅglum man ị̀k hon nhŭeng.

Lae gvạm gid́ mạkmạï phud́ khùen mạ yŭ d́ĕnjad́ naị caị̀khạ̀:
viñyạṇ hặeng gvạmrak khào kad́ krăun man dandị̀;
vannhŭeng khạ̀ngnhà nhangsụe lèm nī̤ ca mạthueng mụecào,
cào phù̀ gụe vhạncaị naị d́ạenklai.

Lạ̄ew mont́ khlang khaung ḅodbleng capen isra,
toa nhangsụe dị̀ luanlạng cacàungmaung cào,
yặng àunvaun man cacàung tạ dị̀ soaïngạm khaung cào,
lae man cakraziḅ yặng sìnvhang lae yặng siang kraziḅ khaung gonrak.

—

Tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos, dans une chambre.

Pascal

Edokko no Lāṇṇạ
or
The Edokkite Lāṇṇạ

§

With the help of Amanda, *Vuḍhijaï* and *Mạnob* I come to Japan in September 1995. With 50 kilogrammes of luggage I board a JAL flight in Manchester for Tokyo. All my belongings are five items, that is four bags and a rucksack.

I must have been a sight to see, like a Hollywood Rambo, with two big bags in my hands, two more hanging from my shoulders and a knapsack on my back. Amazingly enough I was let on board the vehicle with no fines.

'I am a poor student leaving England to take up a scholarship in Japan. I do not want to leave anything behind', I explained to everyone.

I like flying, especially in a long flight. I am a rather disorganised man who always runs around here and there doing things. I live alone and so have to do everything by myself, not unlike an island even though I have always lived my life in a city.

So the only time when I can relax is when I fly. Is it not sad to think that the only place on earth where this poor writer can reflect terrorists try to turn into a hideous political battle ground.

To be fair to my other hobbies, swimming, for example, is also relaxing. I have been a part-time addict of swimming for several years now, and will soon become a full-time one at the Tokyo Institute of Technology to which I am going to be attached for a few years.

I look again at the documents from Japan's Ministry of Education, and discover that there are two kinds of scholarship students only one of which had to pass some examinations.

Myself, I belong to the other type who are nominated not tested. On one page it says in an English translation, 'Unless you have been tested you have to find your own way from the Narita Airport to your destination in Japan, wherever that is'.

That flabbergasts me, or would I rather say that I feel astonished when I see this. I try with my dictionary to read the other page which is written in Japanese, only to find that it probably says something very similar to what I have read earlier.

There is nothing to worry, since there are instructions describing how one could perform the feat, that is to say, to travel on one's own having arrived for the first time in Japan, to the Shoufū Dormitory at Aobadai Station.

At Narita I gather all my bags from a conveyor belt of the travelling industry. The biggest one among them has been slashed open with a knife, perhaps somebody wanted to look at the contents but could not open the zipper as I had put on it a small lock.

I complain to the staffs, and for that have to have not only the bag in question but all five of them, all my worldly belongings in other words, thoroughly checked.

It turns out that I have some medicines with me which I have never once used for a year. There are some pain-killer Paracetamol tablets, Amoxyl antibiotics and Carbon tablets for countering stomach disorders.

Half of the medicines are taken away, presumably at random. They also find one or two magazines which have pictures of some Englishwomen with no clothes on. These too have to be taken away, since the nudity they contain is too absolute. Several officers come and flock around them at the desk next to mine. Everyone is now busy discussing the magazine figures which five minutes ago were mine, and with that I am allowed to pack my bags and leave.

I later receive a handsome compensation from Japan Air Line for my damaged bag, 5,000 yen if I can remember, which is already five times what the thing had costed me in Manchester. But suitcases are usually even more ludicrously priced in Japan all my friends say that the high price I told them what it would have costed to buy another bag like that is too cheap.

But to me a five hundred per cent profit is not such a bad idea. Moreover I am going to be home, yes, finally home again for a few years to come yet.

Last week because of some personal pressure I had to run away from the restaurant where I used to work and live. I have spent the nights working at my desk and in the computer room at the university. During the day I sometimes lay on a bench under the trees, when with my arms crossed I always had a wonderful sleep.

Graham had wanted me to do more study on Voronoi Tessellation, and I know David would not have minded. Together they have supervised Nick and Riaz who are a few year my seniors and whose works are related to what I do. Graham would probably fund my study, and it would have been from his personal resource.

'Look at what you are leaving behind, Kit!', he said in our last meeting where together with David we discuss Viscous Fingering and other possible researches along a similar line.

But Japan is something new and I cannot wait to see the country.

From Narita Airport going into Tokyo is easy. I buy a ticket for the express train according to the instruction in the booklet which I value dearly now. The train brings me to the Tokyo City Air Terminal.

Here I walk a few hundred metres, stand on a conveying belt and up an escalator to be met with some ticket vending machines.

Here someone helps me buy my ticket for another line.

The trouble so far is that everything around me is written in Japanese and nothing in English.

Walking I reach the platform I need when a train pulls up behind me, stops and opens its doors. Written instructions are everywhere, but none of them is of any use to me.

I know it is either this train or the one going from the platform on my left that would take me to my station. I ask one of the last passengers who pass me by, 'Aobadai?' He thinks for half a second and then answers with, 'Yes'.

Sitting at last on the right train gives me no such great comfort. It may seem strange, but in Japan everyone and no one can look at you at the same time. 'Now , I shall never be able to get off at the right station', I silently scream to myself.

I am by now dead tired from hauling, or as my US friends would have said toting all my personal effects along. But I dare allowing myself to catch no naps. I start to count the stations one after another as we pass them. It is my luck, as I will later learn, that this train is a local not an express one, which causes the count to agree with what the instruction in the book says.

At the eleventh count I jump down on to the platform. 'Only one more taxi to go', I think to myself wearily.

The Nippon Housou Kyoukai (NHK) Symphony Orchestra gives free subscription concert tickets to foreign students. Whenever there is one there would be an announcement at the university and you can ask at the International Office for a ticket, though sometimes you need to be quick because these are limited in number.

I watch such concerts on 14^{th} December 1995 and 13^{th} June 1997 , always at 7 pm. The NHK Hall is within a walking distance from the Shibuya Station.

The Japanese language used to have 145 different syllables, but now it has 142. Among these there are 13 leading consonants, namely *k, s, t, n, h, m, y, r, g, z, d, b* and *p*, and only one final consonant, that is *n*.

There are five vowels, *a, e, i, o, u*, and six digraphs, namely *ky, sh, ch, hy, my* and *ry*.

The Japanese government had adopted a new system of spelling, but it did not catch on after the War †. The proposed system merely replaces *shi* with *si*, and similarly *chi* becomes *ti*, *tsu tu*, *fu hu*, *ji zi*, *sha sya*, *shu syu*, *sho syo*,

† *cf* Meiji Matsuzaki. *Angling in Japan.* translated by R. Okada. Board of Tourist Industry. 1940.

cha tya, *chu tyu*, *cho tyo*, *ja zya*, *ju zyu*, and *jo zyo*.

From these possible variations I have the idea that my name, for instance, may be written in the present convention as *Kitchisaku*, *Kitto* or *Kippu*, and my surname *Chapan* or *Chaban*.

Kippu is written the same as *kifū* but it means *liberality*. It is only used in the phrase '*Edokko kippu ga ī*', which means 'Edokkites are liberal and generous'.

Chaban means 'tea tray'. There is no ambiguity whatever with respect to the word *cha* since there is only one character pronounced that way, that is that which means 'tea'.

These are all written using the old, more popular transliterations, but it comes from the insight obtainable from the proposed system and Pali.

Myself I do not much like the new system which renders Fuji San as Mt Huzi and the Shinto the Sinto Shrine.

Perhaps the worst drawbacks regarding the new system is that it is military-like and lacks artistic appeals. Why, for instance, I see no reasons we should like a robot write *ta, ti, tu, te* and *to* while the *ta, chi, tsu, te* and *to* has no ambiguity whatsoever and is infinitely easier to understand and pronounce.

When I design my own system for writing the Daiï language with the roman alphabet I keep an eye on simplicity. For example the long vowels are written the same as their corresponding short vowels, but with a dot underneath them. But when *ạu, ọe, ịa, ụa* and *ọa* are followed by a final consonant the dot may be omitted, since their shorter counterpart may have no final consonants.

For the same reason *ṛảu* can easily replace the otherwise *ṛảụ*. Then, because the under-dot looks simpler than the acute accent, two of the syllabic letters are written as *ṛue* and *ṛụe* whereas the other two become *ḷue* and *ḷụe*. These latter two are never used nowadays, so the more friendly *ĺ* is reserved for the more useful *Ĺ-Culą́*.

A dot put above a letter silences it, but when there is already another symbol there it moves down and becomes an *x*. Thus the Daiï transliteration of *John* is *Cauḣn* whereas the word for 'sacred' is *śakd́xisiddhi* and pronounced as *sak–sit*, or as *sak–sid́* if you would still rather not replace the *mạe kod́* by the simpler, possible equivalent *mạe kot*, again a simplification.

When there are no ambiguities, simplify!

The *tsuribori* are fishing ponds where you pay to fish for a certain amount of time. Various fish may be raised in these ponds, for example the *funa* (crucian carp). The surface of water in the natural setting here can be divided into four parts, namely the lower reaches of the river, the middle reaches, the mountain streams and lakes, and the deep sea.

In the lower reaches of the river there are both the freshwater fish and those that come up from the sea. Among the former are the *funa* (crucian carp), *higai* (*Sarcocheilichthys variegatus*), *koi* (carp), *moroko* (*Gnathopogon elongatus*), *namazu* (catfish), *oikawa* (*Zacco platypus*), *tanago* (*Acheilognathus tabira*) the very tiny, *tenaga ebi* (long-armed prawn), *ugui* (*Leuciscus hakonensis*; aka *haya*, *maruta*) and *unagi* (eel), while the latter comprises the *ina* (the young of the grey mullet), *sayori* (*Hyporhampus sajori*) which is a kind of half-beak, and *suzuki* (*Lateolabrax japonicus*) which is like a sea-bass.

Both the *bora* (grey mullet) and *oboko* (its fry) are caught. The *fukko*, *koppa* and *seigo* are all the young of the *suzuki* in the various stages of development.

Our Japanese class takes us to Fukuoka where we stay in a five-star hotel and tour the Fukuoka Dome. We also go to a planetarium and to watch a *kabuki*.

The Kabuki *za* (theatre) is at Ginza in the *Chūou* Ward of Tokyo. It was opened in 1889 when the place was called the Kobiki *chou* (town).

Invaluable to the history of Japan are the Kojiki (a record, 712) and the Nihon Shoki (a chronicle, 720). The traditional theatre of Japan can be divided into at least five periods †, namely Ancient I (600–800), Ancient II (800–1200), Medieval I (1200–1250), Medieval II (1250–1350), Medieval III (1350–1450) and Medieval IV (1450–1600).

During the first period one finds the *daijoue*, that is the great thanksgiving festival, a court banquet after the enthronement, and the *chinkonsai* which is in effect a service for the repose of the deceased.

In the second half of the ancient period there is the *aware*, literally a moving, albeit happy story, *okashi* which is a strange or amusing story, and the *yosei* which is a story about the afterlife. There arose two types of music and dancing, namely the *bugaku* for the court and the *kagura* for the Shinto shrine.

During this period began the *jushi*, that is the enchanter, who performs in the Sarugaku from the end of the Heian (781–1192) until the Kamakura (1192–1333) Era.

During the Medieval I period were performed in particular the Ennen and the Sarugaku *nou* (Noh).

Sarugaku, literally *monkey show*, is the performance of the Heian Era that is centred around things like the art of using words and impersonation. It was performed when people came to watch the *sumou* (sumo) and in the Imperial Sanctuary in December. The term was later used to call any short performance of a mimicry.

During the Kamakura Period it became the *kabu geki* (song-and-dance per-

† *cf* Yoshinobu Inoura and Toshio Kawatake. *The Traditional Theatre of Japan*. The Japan Foundation. 1981.

formances) which are known as the *kyougen* (Kyogen) and *nou* (Noh).

The Ennen mai, literally *longevity dance*, is the priests' dance that is performed after a big Buddhist gathering at the Toudai and the Koufuku *ji* (temple) in Nara as well as at the other five *dai ji* (big temples), all of which make up the seven big temples of Nambu.

It began in the mid-Heian and prospered during the Kamakura Era.

The second medieval period saw two attacks by the Mongol, that is to say, in 1274 and 1281.

Then the government at Kamakura fell in 1333.

The Zen Buddhism arrived from China, and four other sects of Buddhism, namely Ikkou, Ji, Joudo and Nichiren were created in Japan.

During the Medieval III period were begun the *katari mono* (narrative or recitation) and the *kouta* (popular songs).

There are also the Dengaku and the Shūgen Noh. The latter is performed after the *kiri nou* (Ending Noh) in some of the performance with happy ending, while the former was performed since the Heian Period. Between the Kamakura and the Nambokuchou (1336–1392) Period it was performed in a similar manner as the Sarugaku, but later declined until it is now performed only in either a shrine or a temple.

Kagura, also known as *kami asobi*, was once called *kamukura*. It comprises among other things the *okina* (*lit* an elderly man) and *tanemaki* (seed sowing). It uses as the musical instruments the *wa gon* (Japanese harp), *dai wa teki* (big Japanese flute), *shakubyoushi*, and afterwards was added the *hichiriki*, a flageolet-like instrument.

Hayashi is the musical band accompaniment of various performances, for example the Kabuki, *minzoku geinou* (folk arts), *nagauta* (*lit* long song), and Noh.

Examples of the instruments used are the *fue* (flute), samisen or shamisen, *taiko* (drum) and *tsuzumi* (hand drum).

There are several types of *kagura*, for instance the masked *kagura*, the *mi* (court) *kagura*, and the *sato* (village) *kagura*. The Okina can be either a Nougaku or the transcription for the Samisen thereof.

The *zae no onoko* is that amusing performance within the otherwise sacred Kagura.

Some say that the *gigaku* was created in Tibet, India. Others think that it was in Wu, China, which was one amongst the Three Kingdoms, and the reason for this is that it is called by another name, *kuregaku*, the character for *kure* and *wu* being the same and meaning 'clamorous'.

A Korean dancer of Paekche–kudara in Japanese– whose name in Japanese

is Mimashi brought it to Japan in 612.

The performers are divided into four groups, namely the *gojin* who are the people of Wu, *irui* the beasts and the birds, *kojin* the barbarians, and *nankaijin* the native of the southern sea.

My present accommodation is 21–13, Matsukaze–Dai, Aoba–ku, Yokohama 227. It is a university's dormitory the name of which is Shoufū, the word *shou* (pine tree) being written the same as the *matsu* in the address while *fū* (wind) that of the *kaze*.

I swim everyday from until less than a month after I arrive in Japan towards the end of my stay. For the university's *shitsunai pūru* (indoor swimming pool) in the *tai-iku kan* (gymnasium) I buy three *nyūjou shou*'s (entrance cards), which last from 11 October 1995 to 10 October 1996, from 14 October 1996 to 13 October 1997, and from 14 October 1997 until 13 October 1998.

On 14 November 1995 Ellen writes. She can hardly contain herself for she has just received a letter from her friend Angelique after not having heard from her for such a long time.

The latter is a lovely French girl whom I met when I visited Ellen at her place in the Whitworth Park.

Ching is a Buddhist woman and Ellen's spiritual leader. She used to dress all in white, but then one day makes a complete turn-around to behave like a movie star, and that disillusions Ellen.

I have told her a year ago that I never believe in a living person, even though I might do some of his teaching. I believe in God, I trust the Jesus who died on the cross who is now inside all of us who believe what he says, so that we may know how to reach the former directly through him who is now the main part of the Me within each of us.

We should sacrifice ourselves for the sake of no leaders, for the whole is nothing if not us, and if we would not even look after this sphere of the universe which is closer to us than to .all the other souls that live then we could not possibly better the world.

We are each of us a Voronoi cell within the tessellation created by God, each of us just touching all the neighbouring cells without invading it. All such cells are but a part of the whole. The very idea of a spiritual leader is thus a paradox. A soul may teach but never commands.

The following is an adaptation of what I wrote the evening after a day spent in Gorton with Clara, on one summer day of 1995.

In Gorton

Here we sit and talk together,
that is you, Asim, and I.

Or rather it is you
who do the talking,
and we listen all the while.
You are all sincere and kind.

What do we talk about?
You tell us about your life,
Tom, Jim, Alison.
I know them so well now, or nearly,
as if I have met them.

What a nice summer we have!
What nice breezes these are!
And quite a few people here, too,
at the Reservoir. Wonderful!

People on their way passed us by.
Some with their dogs,
others fishing sit,
or on the water are.
And those kids on the pier,
some of them do the somersaults.
So the din is no threats for us,
only their own excitement.

I try to relate these things to you
so that you can see them.

How is your hip now? Clare,
you say you do not feel old.
I understand what you mean, and
want to feel that way too.

I write some *haiku*s, in English, as my Japanese is not fluent enough.

As a part of the Whole we may die and yet never perish. Meanwhile we may love, laugh and cry.

The moon, unmoved,
Shines over catastrophes,
lost love, vanity.

You never say too much when you mean what you say, for you never mean to say too much. So in fact when we think someone is talking more than he should what we mean is that he does not yet know how to do it properly, for never is it possible that we may manage that many things to do when life itself is all readily too short.

Hush! Pianissimo!
You have caused too much noise,
Forsakened dreamer.

I shall not judge, I blame not my past love. Everything has its course, everyone has his own way, and so has she.

'All's in vain', she said!
Oh! How just, how kind, how nice.
With these words I die.

Recently I email to Asim often. On 8^{th} November 1995 he says he has received my email yesterday and has told 'Claire' about it over the telephone. She was very happy and sending her love to me.

John is on holidays. When he come back Asim will try visit her again weekly.

He write again on 16^{th} November 1995 when he say that whenever he calls her he says 'Hello!' to her from me. She has given him a message for me, saying, 'Good wishes and many more progresses in life!'

On 19^{th} November 1995 , 'I will go to see Clare this Tuesday. Kit you have written a poem for her. I can deliver it to her if you want to because I visit her every Tuesday'.

Things happen much faster now because of the Internet. Some people even no longer bother about pressing the *shift* key.

By 'a poem' he probably means the one I had hid, after having written it, in my home directory at the Control System Centre. I never ask him what he was doing there, but since it has become known I might as well put it here. As it was meant essentially to be a soliloquy, you could do well to ignore my English. I wrote it as fast as possible from the impression.

We are in Gorton, Clare

We sat there talking together
you, Asim, and me
or, to put it correctly,
you did the talking,
we listened

you are kind, sincere, virtue
what did we talk about ?
you talked about your past
Tom, Jim, Allison

I nearly know them
as if I have met them

What a nice summer
what a nice breeze
quite a few people were there
at the reservoir in Gorton

people passed us, some with dogs
others sat fishing
or are on the water
kids on the pier did some somersault

I tried to relate these to you
as you could not see well

how is your hip, Clare ?
you said you did not feel old,
I think that I understand your meaning
in future I will feel the same

On 23^{rd} November 1995 I know that she had an argument with Stephen, and for that reason he stopped going her house making an excuse that he is busy in his study.

Asim will attend the Christmas party where he will look after Clare. He tells me he is cooking chicken with rice and vegetable nearly everyday. I have guessed as much.

On 25^{th} November 1995 I go with my class to a historic town where there are many old Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, and a palace of the 12^{th} century.

Kamakura is a very nice town. Here you can find a big image of the Buddha sitting outdoor without any cover. Here also there are many interesting legends and stories some of which are historical while the others are religious.

For example, one very big tree there was the very tree behind which an assassin hid himself before he attacked the last Shogun.

Japan used to be divided in to the eastern and the western parts. The capital, before the 11^{th} century, used to be not Tokyo but Kyoto which is on the western side.

After the East had won the last war of the clans, the then government moved their office to Kamakura while still maintaining Kyoto as the capital as usual. It was only since after the last Shogun was killed that Tokyo has become a new capital in place of Kyoto, and that the Shogun era had ended. The following era was to be that of the emperors.

There is a trip with the Japanese class, 26^{th} November 1995 , and on 27^{th} November 1995 there is a party at 5.30 pm at Toukoudai (Tokyo Institute of Technology, TIT).

Asim seems to like the poem that I wrote. He says he like my idea of writing a poem using words such that everybody may easily understand. Secondly it covers the things which happened during the time of our visit which reminds him the picture of our meeting with Clare.

On 5^{th} December 1995 there is a party between 8 and 10 pm at the Westin Hotel in Tokyo, which is inside the Ebisu Garden Place next to the Ebisu Station on the Yamanote Line. Today is the birthday of the King of Daiï, that is Rama IX or Bhụmibol. The party is organised by the Daiï ambassador.

This place is in the middle of Tokyo, and not far from my University. There are many Daiï people here. Japan, especially Tokyo, is all crowded with Daiïs. I have met many of my friends.

At the party a telephone company offers free long distance calls, so I make one home. *Nhăung* tells me over the phone that she will have an email address soon. I am going to sleep at my laboratory tonight. I have found out a solution for avoiding the crowded rush-hour in Tokyo, that is to do your things at a different time from other people. I think it would work.

This month there is going to be a big celebration in Tokyo on the day that World War II ended. Seven overseas students from TIT are invited and I with them. Our teachers have many interesting programmes for us. I feel privileged.

I am about to finish reading *Les Misérables* (1862) by Hugo (1802–1885). I have not read any Jane Austen (1775–1817) yet, so I cannot say whether I like them.

The Chinese classes that I attend are unofficial and are taught by Chinese students at the university. I have met many Chinese students here. They are in general very nice people.

Japanese is a difficult language. So far I have done nothing much apart from going to the Japanese classes, but my Japanese is still no good.

The weather is very nice when Autumn is still here. This winter we could have some snow.

From Asim, dated 7^{th} December 1995 , '*Assalam-o-alaikum* I believe your lab seems to be better than a house. It has been snowing here since two days'.

Today, 8^{th} December 1995 , we have a Japanese test, that is the first book of the *nihongo no kiso* (fundamental of the Japanese language).

After that we go to the Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Museum near the Meguro Station to look at the exposition of sculptures by Edouard M. Sandoz.

On 10^{th} December 1995 there is a party by the Meguro International Association from 6 until 8.30 pm. We need to be here earlier at 5 pm if we want to help. It is held on the 6^{th} floor of the Community Hall of the Tokyu Cultural Centre in front of Fujigaoka Station on the Den-en Toshi Line, a potluck party where everyone brings one dish.

This is 14^{th} December. If the life in Manchester was a little too rough for me, my life in Tokyo is a little too smooth. It was all right when I had to endure hardships, but now that there are no more of these I begin to feel somewhat guilty and cannot help but think that I should be looking after my parents who are in Daiï now.

The New Year will be here soon, and Christmas! Japanese people do celebrate the latter fairly rigorously, but I have a feeling that the Daiï people do so even more so.

I have just finished reading the *Les Misérables*. I shall read next the works by Milton, which are harder to understand because they are poems whereas the other one is a translated novel.

In my point of view the *Les Miserables* should be considered a historical book that is dressed up as a novel because Hugo gave a lot of the French history of the 19^{th} century.

I have met no Daiï-governmental scholarship students here, but those whom I have met while in Manchester were far from being careful in their spending. This was probably because they also work part-time jobs at restaurants while at the same time receiving the scholarship money. Most of the overseas students here are sponsored by the Monbusho, that is to say, the Ministry of Education of Japan.

I like the music in the Swan Lake very much. I think that I might have seen it in Budapest, but I am no longer certain.

I went to a concert yesterday (14^{th} Dec.). It was a subscription concert by NHK Symphony Orchestra. I am not so sure about the name. I do not know what a subscription concert really mean. In this case it is a concert which allows students to attend free of charge. I think it can mean either a subscribing or a subscribed concert.

They played two songs, which were Symphony No.4 (op. 60 in B flat, 1806) and Symphony No.7 (op. 92 in A, 1812) by Beethoven (1770–1827). I like the Symphony No.7 very much. When it was written Beethoven must have been nearly completely deaf. Tragically he wrote it while regretting at his lost hearing. The NHK Symphony Orchestra is excellent. Japan has a good facility for music.

I find it better to stay at the university during the night than to be at the dormitory.

This is 15^{th} December 1995 and soon it will be Christmas.

X'mas, I have got nothing to do
except to stay here
where by no mean's much so
rigid that the mere
thought of it chills me.

Internet is very important, and is only becoming more so as a mass media. I think that you may rightly doubt it for being a business playground, or as the best way to store information, but as for being a mass media it is second to none.

X'mas is here,
New Year near.
Be my Christmas not white,
I thought that perhaps there might
be some snow in Manchester, so that you may yet see
a white X'mas there for me.

Though this be not a fine poem,
written by a man without a home,
I do hope
that you will be able to cope
with problems both big and small.
Have both the happiness and success withal!

The commemoration for the end of World War II is held on 18^{th} December 1995 .

From the Intensive Class of Japanese we travel together to Monbusho, have lunch on the bus, then go to the National Theatre. The security measure is very strict. We stand in a queue in order to get to our seat.

At 2 pm the emperor arrives. There are many people of high position here today, for example the prime minister, ministers, and senates. This is the anniversary which marks the 50^{th} year since the end of the war. This is a big anniversary while the place, that is the Large Theatre (it's actual name) of the National Theatre, is small by comparison.

But it is a big event for us because the invitation to attend this event came from the prime minister in the first place. On top of this, both the emperor and empress of Japan are here. This is not to mention all the others who always come along with people of such a high calibre as this.

Most of them talk about the hostility of the war. It seems that they concentrated mainly on the suffering of Japan and the Japanese people, except for one female senate who clearly talks about the hostility that the Japanese

troop had done throughout the war. We are being broadcasted on the television. I would not be surprised at all if it is now live on international channels, for instance the BBC and the Cable News Network (CNN).

In the evening there is a party organised by the prime minister.

Those that attend this event include the 82 students from abroad, which naturally includes me. The food at the party is very nice.

After a long search, I manage to find the first British person since my arrival in Japan at this party.

I met the first Daii"s *KB* student in Japan, who is a very nice person. There are not that many *KB* students here, only a few persons each year. The total number could be about 40.

Japanese children seem to be unaware about the mistakes made by their ancestors. You find this kind of distorted history not only here in Japan but everywhere. May be it is human nature to say only what we want to, and leave out, or even lie about the rest.

There are 82 foreign students present, according to the announcement anyway. Julie is that first British person that I met here in Japan as mentioned earlier. She is a PhD student in International Relation. She is married and her husband is studying Italian in the UK. She came from the University of Sheffield.

Then again, things get better once to have learnt the language of the country in which you live. The way people think is always reflected in the very nature of their language.

Proposition 1.1. *Every language is the people in the sense that a person is a function of the language he speaks.*

If you accept this proposition, and only if you do so, then we have the following dilemma [sic].

Dilemma 1.1.1. *Japanese is Japanese people. Then (subalternation) if we have Luk, for example, learning the Japanese language, then he is at the same time learning about the Japanese people.*

It follows that after a while you gain insight to how the people of the country think, and thus know how to behave yourself with regard to them. If the contact, for instance, is between TKD (Toukoudai) and UMIST, they will probably respect both UMIST and you too.

The Christmas Party on 21^{st} December 1995 is at 6.30 pm, and the Year End party in the Centennial Memorial Hall from 5.30 to 7.30 pm. The party is for foreign students.

The following day I help cleaning the lab in preparation for the coming

New Year.

The Christmas Holiday lasts two weeks starting from tomorrow. There is another party scheduled for the holiday. I live for parties, because by bread alone we do not live you see. If you ask me about other things I guess that I will probably not know, but ask me about parties and that is another matter.

Parties are not everything (how often do I need to reminding myself about this). My supervisor asks me to write an application form for entering the PhD programme. I got the form from the registrar yesterday but still cannot read it, so I just put it on my desk for the time being. I plan to spend this coming holidays gathering up my courage and shall later attempt to fill in the form, perhaps next year.

I am going to be 30 years old next year. How happy! I am no longer a kid.

Some of my Daiï friends are leaving here to head for home for Christmas.

There will probably be entrance exams for entering the PhD. How I hate exams! I do not think that I will make it. No one here seems to have perceived my ignorance yet, but they will.

In Japan it is, on 23^{rd} December 1995 , not very cold yet since we are lower in latitude compared to the UK. But I think that next month it will be much colder. January is supposed to be the coldest month here.

Tokyo is very nice, and we can even see Mouth Fuji from here. You can call it Fuji *san* but never Fuji *yama* even though both use the same character.

I had done nothing during the holiday. Actually the Christmas Holiday ends today, 3^{rd} January 1996 , and tomorrow everyone will come to the university as usual.

Later on today, *ante meridiem*, I have a party at one of my Japanese teachers' place, together with the rest of the class. That means five of us altogether, the class is that small.

Nhan lives in New York now and I think it is still snowing there. It must be nice to have snow in a big city like that.

Tokyo must be comparatively very hot, for example yesterday I really felt that it was like spring, except that there were no flowers yet.

Tokyo is on the east coast of Japan where it is relatively mild compared to the west coast. I have been staying at the lab. every night for quite a while now. Many students do the same thing. This is one of the things that are different from what people do at UMIST.

The party is at the house of Takeda *sensei* (teacher), which is on the other side of Tokyo if you look on the train's map. But the map does not tell much about the true location. It is only a kind of diagram to fit in the information about all the stations, more topological rather than geographical ones.

I meet the rest of my class at the station in front of the Toukoudai at 11 am. Sensei make for us the Suki, fried rice, ice-cream, and others. Her birthday was some time recent, I think, because we also say 'Happy Birthday!' to her.

She has many cassettes of the Daiï music. Someone in her family has something to do with that country. I miss England badly. Foreigners here are no substitutes for the British people that I know.

Asim writes on 4^{th} January 1996 . Tomorrow will be his last day at UMIST. Its now 45 minutes past midnight and he will start printing his dissertation at 2 am, submit his work on Friday and then spend a week at his Aunt's house. Then he will go back to Pakistan on Friday 12^{th} January.

He says that Clare had been ill in early December, but she has recovered now. She went on a holiday trip with Alison and Steve. She gave me the message 'Merry Christmas & Happy New Year' through him.

'I am grateful for your help during the course and will remember you as a genius friend', he concludes.

Well, he disappears from the scene at around the time when he go back to his country, and neither Ken nor I have a clue what he is up to. There is not much that we can do, but he is in God's hands as I believe he must have always been, so there is nothing to worry about.

I feel more or less at home here in Japan now, that is to say, on 5^{th} January 1996 . There is still the language problem of course, and I do not think that my Japanese is going anywhere. But I no longer worry about that now.

Now I tend to stay at the laboratory every night. Tonight, for example, I do not have any sleep, and the following day sees me back at the pool swimming again for the first time after the Christmas holiday. The pool reopens on 6^{th} January. I could have got myself drowned for the lack of sleep, but (un)fortunately that does not happen. I sleep a little in the evening.

I have given up trying to learn Japanese. I feel fed up with the language. I will just let it develop by its own accord, putting no particular efforts on my part. We shall see if this does not work. I doubt if it would.

There is a party from 11.30 am to 2.30 pm at Fujigaoka on 7^{th} January 1996 , then on 8^{th} January 1996 an interview at counselling centre. I have a minor misunderstanding with Furuta who is my supervisor.

My Japanese class has restarted today, 11^{th} January 1996 , after a long Christmas holiday, and so has my laboratory.

I am looking for some place closer to the university to stay. The Shofu Dormitory where I am now is very far from the university. Apart from this, it is half an hour of walking from the dormitory to the Aobadai Station.

Having said that, the walk could be nice provided that you have the time to appreciate it. And here is the countryside, so you are closer to the nature

than the area around the university.

But I am a workaholic who still love the computer and the Internet so much that I always stay at the laboratory instead of coming back in the windy and freezing night and risk missing the last train, and so on. It is very cold waiting for the train to arrive at the station.

Moreover, back at the dormitory there is no central heating, which makes it very cold and empty in my room. I could have bought a heater, but that would not have been as good as a central heating system. How I miss the convenience of the European dormitory in this respect. No Daiï students here would buy his heater. They always wait for somebody to leave and then inherit one.

But I really would like to have some snow in the city in Tokyo. There could be some in February, or so I am told.

There is a party at TIT on 12^{th} January 1996 at 11 am. I know this because I read the notice at the dormitory.

On 18^{th} January 1996 there is again a subscription concert at the NHK.

John, my teacher in the UK, says on 20^{th} January 1996 that I am already on the pass list. I guess that it means that I have graduated.

It is good when I think that one copy of my dissertation will be kept in the Joule Library at UMIST, and hopefully it will remain there as long as the university does for other people to use in order to better our understanding of the mechanism of percolation and unveil the remaining secrets of the Voronoi tessellation.

I know that percolation must have something to do with God. And as for tessellations, they are geometry and therefore His language if not countenance.

It snows today. Tokyo looks lovely under the snow. It has all melted away by now, but earlier in the day I went for a long train ride just in order to look at the countryside covered with snow.

Going by train is very cheap here if you never get off at a train station. You may take a very long ride and go to some very far places and then come back to the station where you started from. The ticket is only checked at the exit of a station. There are in theory ticket controllers who examine your ticket on long-distance trains, but I hardly ever meet one. Anyhow I have some excuse from my being a foreigner. For this, my Japanese is my witness.

I always thought that something strange occurred to me last year, that is when I decided to do a master degree. If anyone had asked me two years earlier whether I would do that, I would have laughed until I choke. I am now applying for a place to do a PhD here. In the light of what I have just said, what can be more far-fetched than this.

Students who study here are in general previously top from their classes

elsewhere. From this I cannot help but feel myself comparatively stupid. But one should never envy at anyone.

Inops, potentem dum vult imitari, perit.

'You be yourself and be good!', one of my friends might have told me. No one is as impressive to behold as a devout black Christian.

Martin had to write a recommendation email for me again. I have to ask him to do this since I dare not write to ask Graham to do the same thing, since I have not kept the promise that I gave to him and David regarding my carrying on with more works on my own here.

I have underestimated the complexity of languages. Computers are never the same when they support different languages. Even when these languages are similar to one another, for instance English and French, they can still cause some considerably serious bouts of headache.

With a totally different set of characters like Chinese, Japanese and Daiï, you may well forget about the whole thing. Not even local experts know a good solution.

I have nearly finished reading Milton but have yet to start on Austen.

Now that I have done it, that is to say, completing my MSc, I may die in peace.

My memory is no good. I often have to come back to check whether I have locked the door of my room. This is particularly annoying when you are already a couple of blocks away from the dormitory.

My father seems to want to have me back in Daiï soon to get myself married, my project is going nowhere, and I am told that I shall be doing a presentation in Japanese for my entrance exam to do a PhD.

I have already lost my faith in love, so I probably would not know how to find myself a wife now.

Moreover, when it comes to looking for a spouse, in Daiï a Buddhist distrusts a Christian, a Christian uneasy in the presence of a devout Buddhist, a Muslim always misunderstood, Indians and snakes indistinguishable the one from the other as well as among themselves, and a Non-religion looks askance at all, comprehending no one.

Having said all this, I neither am a pessimist nor do I judge.

Buddhism tells us never to have any *diṭṭhi* (opinion). Normal conventions try to say that this word here only means those wrong opinions.

But *right* and *wrong* are poorly defined, especially so when it has to do with such fleeting things as opinions. I maintain that Buddha means exactly what he says, that is one should always have no opinions regarding others, since all opinions necessarily imply our interaction with other people.

In other words, one may not judge. This is not only similar to but exactly the same as what Jesus Christ says, that one shall not judge.

In the light of these, all our differences among the various religions, as well as among the different sects within each of them, necessarily become nonsense.

Various tools and agencies exist and commercialised nowadays that could bring to people together and marry. I wonder where one can find a room for love in such a setting as these. You pay for the service of getting, say, the wife for you. Do not blame me if all this sounds bland, for that is what they are. But even these also follow from the will of God, so one should never judge.

By 31^{st} January 1996 I have already applied for a PhD and I am now waiting for the English and the Japanese exams, and a presentation of my past projects which also has to be done in Japanese.

They must be hatters! After only four months of learning the language! no matter how intensive the course may be.

The intensive Japanese class which I am attending has, at the moment, a visiting emeritus professor in Chemical Engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is also an expert in technical Japanese, especially for technical terms in Chemistry, and has written a book of such a monstrous size. He will be teaching us to read and write technical Japanese literature.

Our teachers are very responsible and work very hard towards our progress.

As a research student I cannot buy the *teiki ken* (term ticket) for the train. It is much cheaper to have one of these, but you need to be a student. So *Kàng*, a Daiï student whom I know buy one for me under his name since he does not need to commute.

The pass costs 11,520 yen and lasts from 4^{th} January until 3^{rd} April 1996. My card commutes me between two campuses of TIT, that is *Ōokayama* and Nagatsuta the stations of which are respectively *Ōokayama* and Suzukakedai.

The train from *Ōokayama* to Futako Tamagawaen is Toukyū Touyoko *sen* (line), and here we must change to another platform to go on the Toukyū Denentouchi line to Aobadai station which is four stations before Suzukakedai.

When I become a PhD student in April, I buy my first term ticket for a month which lasts from 4^{th} April to 3^{rd} May, and it costs me 4,040 yen.

But I move into a new place closer to the university on Friday 1^{st} March 1996 .

I moved my belongings there one week before this, during the weekends when it was snowing heavily, which is very unusual in Tokyo. That means the 24^{th} and 25^{th} of February, this year being a leap-year.

I first moved my things to the laboratory and store them there in my locker or on my desk. My desk was thereby cluttered with things until I move them

into my room at the new place on this white weekend.

I borrow a trolley from our third floor at the South 5 Building. Still it is very difficult to push the trolley through the thick snow lying on the ground. It takes twenty minutes to walk from the place to the lab with no luggage, it must have taken me an hour to do so with them. My new address is Room 207 Aotsuka Height, 2–21–11 Haramachi, Meguro Ku, Toukyou 152.

In Keiou 4 (1868) the government of Edo installed itself in Toukyou and moved the capital of the country here from Kyouto. The city was divided into 15 *ku* (wards) in Meiji 1 (1868), and became Toukyou *chi* (city) in Meiji 21.

In Shouwa 7 (1932) the surrounding towns and villages were added to make 35 ku, and in Shouwa 22 Toukyou Metropolis had 23 *tokubetsu ku* (special wards), 14 *chi* (cities), 3 *gun* (districts) and 3 *shichou* (municipal cities).

The present system of naming the era in Japan began in the reign of the emperor Koutoku (596–654) whose name is Ameyorozutoyohi or Karu. He reigned from 645 until his death, and carried out the Taika Reform.

For the first time in Japanese history a name of an era was officially adopted, that is the Taika Era which lasted five years (19 Jun. 645–15 Feb. 650 according to the dictionary published in 1969 by Iwanami Shouten, or 19 June 645–8 Feb. 650 to the 1971 dictionary published in 1971 by Koudan Sha).

With the governor of the Joumon (Choumon) province presenting Koutoku with a *hakuchi* (white pheasant) the era changes into the Hakuchi Era (15 Feb. 650–Jan. 655 according to Iwanami, or 9 Feb.–10 Oct. 655 to Koudan).

The present era is the Shouwa Era which began on 25 December 1926. Before this it was the Taishou Era lasting from 30 July 1912 until 24 December 1926, and before that the Meiji Era from 8 September 1868 to 29 July 1912. Before the emperor Meiji was Koumei (1831–1866) who came to the throne in 1846 but was officially crowned in 1847. His reign is divided into six eras, namely Kaei (28 Feb. 1848–26 Nov. 1854), Ansei (27 Nov. 1854–17 Mar. 1860), Manen (18 Mar. 1860–18 Feb. 1861), Bunkyū (19 Feb. 1861–19 Feb. 1864), Genji (20 Feb. 1864–7 Apr. 1865) and Keiou (8 Apr. 1865–7 Sep. 1868).

Japanese historians trace their dates far back into the past. One only hopes that these are accurate. We have, for instance, the Ninna Era (21 Feb. 885–26 Apr. 889) under the emperor Koukou (830–887). His name is Tokiyasu and he reigned for three years, that is during 884–887.

In the past, the eras only roughly coincide with the changing of emperors. For example, Koukou died in 887 but the Ninna Era lasts until 889. Therefore the first part of the reign of the following emperor, Uda (his name Sadami, lives 867–931, reigns 887–897) is in the Ninna Era while the other part in the

Kampyou Era (27 Apr. 889–25 Apr. 898).

Uda abdicated for the sake of his son, Daigo (Atsugimi, 885–930), who reigns for 33 years from 897. Like his father, Daigo also reigns in the Kampyou Era before it changes into the Shoutai Era (26 Apr. 898–14 Jul. 901).

I work at the Golden Leaf restaurant at Jiyugaoka. I can neither serve nor cook because neither my cooking nor my Japanese is good enough. So I wash the dishes. Washing dishes in a restaurant is by no means a taxing job. There is a huge washing machine. All you have to do is to put the plates on the racks, put these inside the machine and close its door. Since the machine uses hot water for the washing, there is no need to wipe the cleaned dishes.

From 4^{th} to 19^{th} February 1966 I work almost every evening, on average 5–6 hours a day.

By 7^{th} February 1996 I already know that I will go on to do PhD here. The government here will extend the support they have given me for another three years.

There are various reasons why I decided to move out from the university dormitory now instead of waiting for the term to expire. For one thing, the new place is cheaper, because I pay only a little bit more than 2 *man* (ten thousands), and I think that I will get 12,000 yen help from Monbusho.

I do not know about the electric, water, and gas charges, but the cost is likely to be even lower considering that there are no needs now to buy the train tickets. Obviously less travelling time is required to come to the university. It is reduced to less than half of what previously was. And there are some very interesting international organisation in the Meguro Ward, some of which I might want to come along.

Apart from doing my project, I need to run around and do things. This has been my trait since time immemorial. You might call this an attitude problem, but that is my problem.

If I waited for my term at the dormitory to end, there could be many people looking for a new accommodation then, so I might have to settle for something more expensive than what I pay now, or somewhere further away from the university than here. I have always been staying at the lab all night instead of going back to the dorm.

And Shofu is a men's dormitory, which makes it rather strange especially if you have enjoyed living in a mixed dormitory.

On 23^{rd} February 1996 I have my exams and presentation in Japanese. No one will understand what I say I am sure. But, anyway, I am still waiting for the result of my application to do the PhD.

Now that I have moved from Yokohama into Tokyo, it takes about 15 minutes to walk to the university. I guess living in a private flat will be more

expensive than living in a dormitory. The problem with having to take the train home was that you could miss the last train. The train stops after half past midnight.

There was snow about four days ago. It has stopped now, but there is still some snow left on the ground here and there.

My Japanese class is about to come to an end. I have been lazy lately. I have too many things to do. There is not enough time.

I have been trying to finish reading the Bible, but it seems ever to be far-fetched.

There is a closing ceremony for the Intensive Japanese course on 6^{th} March. I have been given the biggest certificate I ever have in my life, though I do not think that I shall have any use for it in the future.

I know from Furuta on the 8^{th} that I have passed the entrance requirements to do the PhD.

I will be presenting a paper at a conference in St Louis during 24–28 June, perhaps on the 27^{th}. For this there is no financial helps coming from the lab. The Ministry of Education gives our lab more than enough money to look after me, but that is another matter.

During 13–15 March 1996 I travel with the International Students Office at TITech to Kyūshū. We are altogether about fifty. The trip is partly sponsored by the office.

I try many new things, including a hot bath in Japanese style. The first night we stay at a five star hotel by the seaside at Fukuoka city. Nearby is a big stadium. It is inside a dome that can be opened at the top so that it could either be an indoor and an outdoor stadium. The scale of the place is simply amazing. Here there have been concerts by Michael Jackson, Madonna, Simon and Garfunkel, and others. This is the first time that I go anywhere this far from Tokyo.

Graham is at a conference in Australia until next month. I want to get some more works done before my presentation in the US, but it is difficult to carry on a project on my own.

The registration for the PhD is going to be sometime during the week following 24^{th} March. Before the registration there is the graduation ceremony and after that a party for those members of the lab who have recently graduated.

Our laboratory joins with the neighbouring one each year in making the party. The lab will be turned into a drinking bar on that day, while the other lab looks after the food.

I have been wondering until now why there are various kinds of alcoholic drinks in one cupboard in our office, while nobody ever touches them. And

there are a few books here on how to make cocktails. Now I know that both of these are the materials and the handbooks for such parties as the one on the coming 26th March. We are going to be not only a drinking house but also a cocktail lounge.

I will meet up with my parents and both of my sisters in New York before I go to St Louis to do my presentation.

My PhD thesis can be written in English. It seems they usually prefer theses to be written in that language when possible. This is true for all written reports, but on the other hand presentations are always preferably in Japanese.

I want to be registered as a student first, before applying for the US visa. The registration is on the twenty-eighth of March.

There is no letter of acceptance from the conference because it is announced on the Internet.

I am not going to be in Manchester for my master-degree graduation ceremony because it coincides with the presentation in the US.

On 26th March there is a graduation ceremony at the university. Daiï students meet to take pictures. No students in all the world take as many photographs on their graduation as the Daiïs. There must be some reason for this.

I become a PhD student in April 1996. My identification number is 96D39105.

Months are standardised into twelve in number for a year. This is the same the world over. But the year count depends on your philosophy, national identity, or religion. In the West the year we use is Anno Domini, in the year of the Lord, in Daiï Buddhist Era, and in Japan the name of the Emperor. Therefore I was born in AD 1966, BE 2509 and Shouwa 41 at the same time, and it is now AD 1996, BE 2539 and Heisei 8.

The good thing about having religious beliefs is, according to Ellen, that you can always find some explanation for your doubt, happiness and disappointment to calm your mind. And the last resort for the unexplainable things is that they are God's will.

Experto credite (Virgil, *Æneid* 11.283).

She is currently working on an oil company project, that is as of 19th April. She says that I may visit her in Vienna.

Cū's dissertation is on heat exchanger and she writes it in Fortran. She says on 30th April that the weather in Manchester at the moment is nice even though it is rainy.

She came 21st in her class of 32. She does some exercises and swimming

in the gym. She went to see the *Wind in the Willow* on 16 May but thought that the first act was boring.

Ellen thinks that when people cannot eat they will make sure that no other people may eat. But if we look after the others, then God will also look after us 'The ladles were that long,' she says, 'and to spoon-feed each other must be very easy and lots of fun'.

I think that other people are in actuality a part of us as we a part of them. Both are parts of the same whole, which was what we always have been and which is also what we shall be. When we hurt one another we injure no one apart from ourselves.

I fly to the US on 21 May 1996. I go to the Niagara Falls, Washington DC, New York City, and then to St Louis where I attend a conference.

The Niagara Falls is in Buffalo. The Youth Hostel here gives me the map of the surrounding and tells me where I could walk around and where I should not go.

This is to be one of the highlights of this trip. The others are Nova Scotia where you feel yourself so close to the nature, and Washington DC where everything interesting is all free.

It is reasonably warm but windy at the falls. I like them so much that I could sit here and look at them for hours.

The food here is very cheap. I buy a big bag of popcorn and it lasts me several days.

In New York I stay with my sister Nhan who lives in the accommodation of the Columbia University. She meets me at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Airport and then we take the subway to her *apartment.*

We are already in front of her place when she crosses to the other side of the street to buy some eggs, and tripped over a string that somebody had tied across the footpath. The tendon of her right-hand thumb is torn when she falls down, so later we go to the emergency room at the university's hospital for the operation to stitch it.

This is one of the cities where people on the street go crazy, so you need to always stay on the look out.

Somebody fell asleep in a subway train and woke up attacked by a knife in the face. So you should never close your eyes when you travel underground.

You should always keep a reasonable distance from any stranger. Once an elderly lady was pushed down the platform to her death on the track, again of a subway and for no particular reasons.

On 1^{st} June 1996 we watch *The King and I* by Rodgers & Hammerstein, at the Neil Simon Theatre, New York, 2 pm. After that we watch the *Cinderella*

at the Metropolitan Opera, 8 pm.

On 5^{th} June 1996 by myself I go on the Circle Line which cruises around Manhattan, from 11.30 am.

My accent now is neutral, that is neither Kiwi nor British, though definitely not American. As a proof of this, I need no documents to pass as a local not a tourist. You pay less on the cruise if you live here, that is why.

I only hand out the money and casually exchange a few words with the lady who sells the tickets. She knows a nomad when she sees one.

I like New York. It is not a safe place, and that is not why I like it. But I have heard that it has become much safer than it used to be five or six years ago. Now the downtown area is safe, by the standard here anyhow, though close to it there are areas which are unsafe.

The northern part of Manhattan is wild and not very nice. There you become used to the sound of sirens.

The unsafe areas are namely, the East and the West Harlem's, Bronx, and Queens.

The Central Park in the middle of Manhattan is like a forest. One day during my visit here a girl is killed inside the park. The news seems as if it is nothing unusual.

The park itself is very interesting. But this is probably what that girl thought and what her murderer knows.

New York is built on a layer of solid rock called the Schist. This is the reason why so many skyscrapers can be built here. The rock acts as the best foundation for these buildings. Outcrops of these rocks can be seen inside the Park.

Nhan drives us in a rented car up to Canada. At one point she is crossed at me for being too poor at reading maps and co-piloting. I think it must be the wound from the operation that worries her.

With her hand in the plaster cast she is the only one who drives as my father is now an elderly and exempted from the driving, my mother does not drive, it has been years since I was behind the wheel, and I have no licences for driving here.

Considering this, she is doing a good job already, so I largely keep my mouth shut.

Ben always says, 'People never change'. He must be right.

At other times we say, 'People change', and we are absolutely right too.

The funny thing about objective sayings is that they are all true no matter how contradictory they are among themselves.

In Canada we go to the Nova Scotia. The name is not French, because then it would have been called *Nouvelle-Écosse*, but Latin. And I think that *Scotia* is a Latinised version of the English word 'Scotland', because the Romans called Scotland not by that name but *Calēdonia*.

It had been a part of the French territory Acadia until 1713 when it became an English territory. It has numerous lakes, rivers and forests, and is the fishermen's land. Halifax is its capital.

But the Acadia National Park is south of here, an archipelago in the US north from the New York City. We visit this latter on our way back, when I am held with awe by the beauty of the panoramas of the surrounding sea from the top of a mountain.

The land here is mainly covered with forests. Though there are a few cities, in general there are not that many people. But those we meet are kind and helpful, and this includes all the staffs who are also very good-mannered.

Unlike in the US, here one feels safe on the street. Many of the smaller towns through which we pass have a population of less than a hundred.

All around there is the beauty in the simplicity. I have never been to the Grand Canyon, but I guess that it must be somewhat different there where the beauty is instead in the grandeur.

Yet never does nature lack grandeurs. There are many scenic drives and whale-watching boats. On our way back to the US we visit the house in which the Roosevelts used to live.

Back in New York the city looks as unfriendly and disordered as ever. It seems even more so when you come back to it after a trip. The traffic here is not only a headache but also a heartache. My parents return to Daiï the very evening we arrive, and are thus spared the agony of adjustments.

I noticed that people in US, especially those in New York, never talk but shout when they speak to each other. Thus this is literally a *shouting city.* There are shouts on the street and, in fact, everywhere.

Wie soll ich wissen, was ich sage, bevor ich höre, was ich rede.

Stefan said this who is a member of our lab. But of course this proverb means a different thing, and not the shouting in order to hear oneself amidst the city noises here. I tell you it is not only from the noises that we shout but also from the nerves, and that is worse.

Wie soll ich sage und höre?

St Louis is nice place but it is very hot here. The conference is exhausting. In a way this city is similar to Manchester because it used to be a centre of commerce, and of the boats that navigated the Mississippi River, and the railway networks. But now it has become quiet, and there is nothing much for one to do here.

The headquarters of the Budweiser beer is here, however, so I visit the plant and later try some free beer.

Here I stay at the Youth Hostel which is not in a safe area. I walk along the street from the town centre, trying to find it. A couple stop their car to ask where I want to go. I tell them, 'The Youth Hostel'. Upon hearing this they tell me to hop into the back seat, then drive along less than half a kilometre further down the road before pulling over to the right. Still not realising that this is the place, I was by them led through a narrow passage between two houses which opens up on the inside and then, 'Voila!', there it is, the Youth Hostel. I would never have found the place even if I walked past it. More likely than not I would have spent one more hour before I would find the place, were it not for this couple who have risked their lives helping me who had risked my life coming with them.

Still, there is no questions whatever that this is a dangerous place. When you come back here on the bus after dark, you need to get off precisely at the right stop. For if you missed it and got off at the next stop, not only would you be walking a long way back but also you would during that time be in a great anticipation of falling a prey to something or another.

But if the worse comes to the worst and you have already missed your chance of getting safely off, then the best thing to do is to go along all the way to the next supermarket where there would be people around, and from there get another bus back. The driver would probably understand and give you a free ride.

My supervisor, Furuta, is also here at this conference presenting a paper of his. He takes me to a restaurant inside the hotel where he stays and where we have the conference, and treats me to a dinner. We have steaks and beers, and have a most enjoyable talk when I tells him many things, for instance where I.had been before coming to the conference. I also tell him about this interesting tour of the Budweiser's headquarters. The next morning I do not see him at the conference.

On the morning of 1^{st} July 1996 I read in the newspaper a *haiku* the translation of which is the following.

A snake has already gone away,
But its eyes which were staring at me
Still lingers upon the grass.

This is far profounder than the English, 'Once bitten, twice shy'. Here there has been no physical contact, only the look. Should one thank God for having the snake spare us? Should one wonder where it is going to, what it will do, or whether it will come back again? Should one fear the serpent because of that close-encounter, or fear for its safety because it has just spared

us? And so on. One needs not understand this poem at all. On the contrary, one likes it precisely because one does not understand what it tries to say. It gives you questions not answers, which is always better.

On 26^{th} August 1996 ,

I think that my ex-girl-friend should
not be the one to be blamed. For
I believe that she really did like me,
but she might like breaking my heart more.

Sadly to say, I shall never be more profound than this. Sigh!!

Today I have had an accident with my bike and my leg is still bleeding.

Last Saturday
I biked
about 25 km within Tokyo.
I loved it.
I will do more,
unless I break my leg before.

Nhŭeng is being curious in Daiï, for he writes today, 28^{th} August 1996 , 'Tell me about Japan. Tell me what you like about Tokyo. Tell me about people there. Tell me about your friend. Tell me anythings'. He has an MBA from the US and owns a company.

I have just come back from a birthday party. In fact it was two birthday parties in one. There will be people graduating soon, so we plan to go somewhere, probably seaside.

I am going to finish this roll of film I have in my camera. Then I shall put the camera away and give up taking pictures. We shall see whether that will not give me some peace of mind.

It is raining. I hope that the weather will be fine this Sunday, and the sky clear as forecasted, so that we may go to the sea.

I am going to write some emails first, and then go home on my bicycle.

On 30^{th} August 1996 Nok says that this Sunday is also going to be Eng's birthday party.

Then on 31^{st} August 1996 I go to a big temple in the middle of Tokyo called the Meiji Shrine. It is in the Shibuya area.

On Sunday 1^{st} September 1996 *Cū* says that she is writing up her dissertation but has decided against carrying on to the PhD. Together with *Ọ* she

will move to the Orient House which is opposite to the university where they shall have to stay the minimum of six weeks.

Today I try to go to the Enojima for the Daiï party on my bicycle, because I am currently very crazy with it. I go to as far as Ofuna, which is two stations away from Tsujido. Then it is already in the afternoon, so I decide to give up and come back. It has been a good ride, no less than 100 kilometres. I am worn-out too because I get lost many times and have to go back and forth several times in order to find my way.

The trip is an impressive one and at times exciting, a very good experience for me. It is like nothing when you enter the Hodogaya tunnel on a bicycle. I feel like I was inside a computer game and in the virtual-reality, but it is real though.

In fact I am not supposed to be in here on my bike, because this is a motorway! But somehow the flow of the traffic has led me here. I had been travelling along the footpath when it suddenly came to an end. Instead of going back, I got on the road hoping that there might be another one soon. I soon found myself in the middle of a fast-flowing traffic. To turn back now would mean to go against the traffic.

By the time a truck driver feverishly gestured to me I had already understood that I was in the wrong place, a bicycle on the motorway. In replying to him I thought to myself, 'I know! But what can I do?' But there is little else I could do now except to follow the flow of the traffic until I find some better place to leave the road, so I bowed and say, '*Sumimasen!*', to the other drivers.

However, it leads me into this tunnel. I feel as though I was a model-aircraft inside the wind-tunnel. The inside of it is lit.

Just before entering it another road joined us on the left, and I could not have changed the lane lest I jeopardise not only my life but those of the other lawful road users. Travelling so fast myself, yet streaks of light overtake me from behind on both sides. I feel like a pilot in the Star War fleeing from his foes who were trying to shoot at me from behind with the bright laser beams.

All the shots missed me by a hair's breadth. Their colour turned into red, and I could see them coming together in the distance in front of me.

Finally I can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Up until now the noise in here is like what you might have heard if you found yourself inside a conch shell. All these rich harmonies die down by leaps and bounds upon our approaching the exit to the tunnel.

Being outside again, in the sunlight and the fresh air, I feel reborn. After that I leave the motorway through a toll gate without having to pay any fee. Bicycles are uncategorised and therefore not listed on the fee table.

Otsubo says on 4^{th} September 1996 that she had been to Kuala Lumpur

(KL), Malaysia, from 24 to 29 August, and came back to Japan in the morning of the 30^{th}.

She visited some of her friends who has been teaching Japanese at a university since May. She was impressed by the friendliness of the people and the wonderful nature there. And as for the food, it was simply incredible. Her friends took her out to the *yatai* (food-stalls) where they had the *satee* (yakitori), *roti canai* (pancakes and curry), and very sweet tea. It is interesting how *roṭi canai* is the rendering in Daiï of Japanese *rōtī janai*, which means 'not a roti'.

Then they went to the beaches in Kuala Terenganu on the east coast.

Terenganu once belonged to Sïam. But even then its Daiï name was Malay, as it was called '*Trangkạnụ*'. So I guess it belongs here even before the British took it for the Malaysians and Malays.

There were the city tour, river cruises and waterfalls. Then it was back to KL and the shopping spree.

I have been in Daiï. While there I stayed for two weeks in my hometown Jiangmhăị, which is up north, and then in Bạngkauk for another two weeks.

In Bạngkauk where I used to live and work, I helped Ben arrange a garden for competition at one of the five-star hotels there. I hope that he would let me know the result of the competition sometimes because I left for Japan before the event took place.

Other than that I have met some new friends and went for a night out with the fencing club at the university where I used to study. I had been at a couple of parties, cycled around, played the piano, and swum in an outdoor swimming pool whenever I had time. I met some of my former teachers.

Two of my friends died, one from an accident, the other from cancer. The rest have either married, changed their job, or bought a new car.

I met most of those whom I planned to meet. I visited friends at both TelecomAsia and Jasmine where I used to work. And I have done what I had set out to do, that is bringing my bicycle back with me to Japan.

I still have not received my MSc certificate. They could have sent it to the wrong address.

I enjoyed my trip to Daiï. In Jiangmhăị I often sat at the piano and played the song *Home Sweet Home*, but I cannot even remember the tune now. I stayed one week in Bạngkauk, two in Jiangmhăị, and then another one in Bạngkauk.

I swam at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University's pool. It was outdoor, so I am now tanned all over.

Among other things, I have both my passport and my obligatory Daiï-

citizen ID card renewed.

I went to parties and met those people I know, some of whom did not think that I had been away but instead thought that I was in Daiï all the while. One of my teachers thought that I was still at the university struggling with my first degree. Teachers tend to look upon you as kids and underlings. Or else they might be too busy or have taught too many students.

With the bike, I took both of its wheels off and then put everything in the bike-bag which my mother had helped me make from an old cushion's case.

Jāun had also been to Daiï when she had her wisdom-teeth removed. She went to Rayaung with her family and two of her friends. Apart from these, she had translated her fourth-year report into English because her Japanese teacher wants to see it.

Ellen is still in Vienna and will stay there until 28 September. She agrees with me that it was an achievement my bringing the bicycle with me on the plane from Daiï to Japan.

Einstein (1879–1955) says, 'Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love'.

Today, that is 5^{th} September 1996 , I go on my bike to have my visa extended at Shibuya. So I am away from the university for nearly all day. I take my lunch box with me, so I had the fried rice for lunch at the US Army Station near Shibuya.

The Daiï word for a lunch box *pĭntọ* is imported from the Japanese's *bentou*.

After that I go to the Institute of Industrial Science of Tokyo University in Roppongi. I want to visit a friend of mine, *Suradej*, who is going to graduate soon. He is three years my junior at the CU's ENG (Engineering Faculty). But since I have not emailed to him first, I found out that he was not in. To me this means that he has already graduated. In Japan you always find someone at their laboratories unless they have already graduated and are merely waiting for the ceremony thereof.

Rick says on 6^{th} September 1996 that he had visited Boston and New York while G says that his project is something to do with the Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH) network for southern west-coast project. It is a new technology in the transmission system.

The following day Rick still does not know the topic for his dissertation, but he wants to travel to Japan some day.

At UMIST in Manchester the Hewlett-Packard (HP) has been down for a week according to *Cū*. She stays in Lambert until the 10^{th}.

Ọ is with her boy-friend. Her department is going to fund her through the PhD.

Cū also finds out later that her supervisor could also find some scholarships for her. But she wants to start working and besides does not want to teach.

Today, 7th September, I go to the World PC Expo'96. It is being held at Makuhari Messe in Chiba, which is on the other side of the Tokyo Harbour. I come here on my bicycle.

On my way here I really enjoyed the scenery. Tokyo has so many rivers and its harbour is very nice.

At the exhibition, I sit down to have my picture taken by a digital camera. The digital cameras are a reasonably new gadget. I receive one colour printout of my picture to keep as a souvenir. Technically speaking, the resolution of the print is excellent. But my picture does not look nice because I have been sweating all over on my way here on the bicycle. It took me four hours.

I have a free ticket from *Ḥūï*, so there is no need to pay for the entrance.

I look at the virtual-reality screen displays. You wear something which looks like an eye-protection that one wears doing the welding.

Inside, there are two screen displays, one for each eye. I am one moment hovering over the Big Ben, and the next swoop down toward the city and through its alleys and streets. I have to brace myself together and keep my hands close to my body for fear that they might hit something if I stick them out. The buildings and the lamp-posts on both side passed you by like real things.

I have a plastic frame from this exhibition. So at home I put *Cū*'s picture into it and put it on my table.

According to Einstein, 'Things should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler'. What can be more simple!

On 8^{th} September 1996 I come to the Kitanomaru Park. From here I go to the Tokyo and the Kanda Station's, a Confucian shrine called Yujima Seido, the Tokyo University where I see the famous Akamon (red gate) and have a look around inside of the university, and then the Ueno Park where I visited a shrine called the Nazu Shrine one kilometre to the north of it.

In the park there are many ponds and lakes, and one of them is beautifully filled with lotuses.

I stop at the Tokyo Hands in Shibuya, shop at Daiei on the Meguro *douri* (road), and then come back.

Cū is moving to the Orient House in Granby Row next Wednesday. She may go to either the eastern European countries or the US following her study.

The bike lives, I live. The bike's gone, I'm gone (Me, 10^{th} September 1996).

Ken says he is going to do the Kungfu until the day he dies. I shall have to

tell him to put on a helmet or some protective gear. The Shaolin Style that he practises is well known in Daiï as the mythical boxing of the *Vaḍ Sàolhin* (Shaolin Temple).

In swimming, I can do a non-stop butterfly reasonably with ease now, and feel good about it. I find it relaxing.

I am a little scared about all the ado going on here about expecting a big earthquake in Tokyo. No one can predict an earthquake, but in this case they say that it is to be expected from the past statistics. Newspapers, I think in the US, have been talking about three minutes that will change the world.

Ellen is going to Cambridge for her master degree. She said this since 6^{th} August.

Nhũeng seems agog about Japanese girls. He thinks that I have a digital camera, so on 12^{th} September 1996 he says he wants me to send him some photos to him by email.

There is a misconception in Daiï that all girls here are *ike ike* (easy), which can be no further away from the truth for all those whom I now know are respectable.

But to him I say that there were sexy models posing on the stage at the World PC Expo where I had been, and it is true they were among the sexiest creatures I have seen on the surface of this planet. I tell him that I only had my picture taken by one at the Canon booth there.

No girls would have looked at me twice. Businessmen would never understand how one could possibly go to such an exhibition looking like a tramp the way I did.

As it was, I took some pictures there with the digital camera, and then one of the exhibitors took one for me. As a cameraman I seldom have my picture taken, but that was what she insisted.

This is a great country where, even at a big exhibition like this, they let you wander around for half an hour with their latest model of the digital camera, and know that you would bring it back to them. Out of *enryo* (consideration) I only used the camera for fifteen minutes when I took pictures of those who catwalk on the stage. Then we look at my masterpieces on the screen.

The Daiï word for *enryo* is *kreṇgcaị*, which is closer to it than the English *consideration* does.

Kạc's friend, *Gomkṛịj*, lives in Kyoto. He also has a bicycle which he uses every morning to climb up a hill.

I love Japan. I would not have had I not been around on my bicycle. Most Japanese people will love their own country too if they had been to the countryside, far from the madding offices.

This is a country where people respect you on your bike. The *mawari san* (policeman, *lit* Mr going-about) here go about on their bicycles.

Passing Chiyoda on my way back I ask a policeman there the way when it was nearly 10 pm. He told me the way and then asked where I was from and from where I was coming. I told him both, then his eyes simply lit up and we stood there talking for no less than fifteen minutes.

There are no boundaries in cycling. We could do well to abolish the saloon or the sedan cars together with their windscreens or windshields, and then adopt for our respective countries the bicycle, even this or the open sedan-chair, as the official means of transportation.

Soliloquy (13^{th} September 1996),

I want to find someone
whom I can live for.
Not much of a woman she has to be,
this I never ask for more.

On 16^{th} September 1996 I try the lower-circle route of Tokyo, according to what is recommended in the book *Cycling Japan*.

From Meguro station to Shinagawa, then follow the monorail track up to as far as the Tsukiji Wholesale Market only to find that is closed, so I visit the Buddhist temple at Tsukiji instead. After that, it is Ginza, the Imperial Palace, the carps-fishing place on the moat nearby, the British Council which is also closed, and then come back along the Aoyama Dori.

By exploring Tokyo on my bike, I have come to love the city.

Last Sunday there was a festival. People carry shrines of their villages and processed along the smaller lanes, everywhere through out Japan.

I went and have a look along the streets, as well as to a shrine where there was a fair. Booths were set up for selling food and setting up games for people to pay and play.

Then on Monday, which was also another holiday I still do not know what it was, I went on my bicycle to Ginza. The whole street was cut off from the traffic and people were allowed to walk freely about. The same is true for a few other places like Shibuya and Harajuku.

On 19^{th} September 1996 I go to the centre of Tokyo, to British Council. There is a library there, but it is very expensive to become a member.

The scenery around that area is really nice. There is a big moat both wide and deep. On one side of this there is a forest and a railway track, while on the other side a street, bicycle track, and lots of buildings.

I shall bike to my heart's content, PhD or no. For the moment, long live cycling!

For one reason or another I find myself saying to Ng, 'Why don't you search for control systems' sites around the world, on the Net. Then you can email to inquire each place whether they would like you to apply or not. By doing it this way I should think that you can avoid situations where there are far too many applicants. You will get rejected more often, that is certain. But according to the law of a salesman, you increase your chance of success.'

To which he replies, 'I think your suggestion of the salesman idea is good'.

A little learning is a dangerous thing.

On 22^{nd} September 1996 I suppose that I am too weak, and too attached. I probably need to become more detached.

These past several days had been a happy time for me, since I received three letters one after another all of which are long waited for. They are from both New Zealand and Japan. I must reply them quickly this time.

There had been a big typhoon for a few days now. Fortunately it finally stopped today. Tempests are exciting things and I love them.

This morning I cycled home through the typhoon. Just when I was about to reach the last left-turn, I pulled on the brakes so hard because it was down hill. The front brake snapped loose. The cable was torn cleanly off. Tonight, before coming here, I disassembled all the brakes systems, that is to say, I pulled the cable out as well. Then I repaired the thing that is broken, and made a new paths of cables for both.

Made in Taiwan, the bike was assembled in Ḅạngkauk. Give me five more times doing the disassembling like this and I am certain that I will make a better bike specialist than the one who put this thing together in Ḅạngkauk two years ago.

Tomorrow is a holiday, but I still do not know what makes it so.

In Ohio it is around 10–20°C.

For £40 *Pọ̀* could sell for *Cū* the CD player that used to be mine, a remarkable feat which proves that he is a businessman. In fact all those who take a scholarship from the Daiï government to do the postgraduate study abroad are businessmen.

Here the wind blew very strongly, and it rained for more than 24 hours at one time. From the university to my home, just before reaching the last left turn there is a stretch of about 300 metres of a down-hill slope. I always let go of my pedals during that part.

It is morning already. I had been in my office since the tempest stopped last night. The sun is coming up.

I have just had my visa extended last week, for another year. To be honest, I do not expect that I shall graduate. The odds are against me so.

Ḍẹj is back from a conference in Hungary, 27 September, and *Táo* had offered *Cū* a scholarship, 8 October.

I have just come back from Atagawa which is three hours by car and to the south of Tokyo. I had attended a conference there. I also talked there for about half an hour about my research.

The town was close to the sea, a very nice and small town famous for hot mineral spring. We stayed at a hotel and my room looked down toward the bay, which was really beautiful.

I quite enjoy the Japanese-styled hot bath. I like the one which is out door where you can comfortably sit in the warm water while just above your head the air is cold.

Cū plans (9 Oct.) to go to Spain next month.

In Cambridge (10 Oct.) Professor Meerless has just won the Nobel prize in Economics.

Ellen says she wants to introduce me to a lovely Lā̱nnạ girl whose name turns out to be, of all the names, 'Lanna'.

Here in Tokyo, 12 October, there is an earth-quake just now!

I think that we usually show only our good side to people, even to ourselves.

Ellen kind of presses me on 13^{th} October 1996 when she asks whether it is true a Daiï man does things only for fun. I am a Lā̱nnạ, but I answer her just the same. Daiï people like an easy, trouble-free life, 'doing things only for fun', the word for *fun* in Daiï being *snuk*.

Daiï people usually take pride in their cultural heritage. They think that the Daiï language's tonal system covers more domain of all the enunciations, of all other languages combined, than any other languages of the world, but a professional linguist knows better.

They thought that the classical Daiï dance was the most exquisite and elegant one in the world, but it is only a unique one as such. Thinking that something is fun, is probably one way to deceive and encourage yourself at such times when things that need to be done get difficult.

Daiï people who live abroad normally think of their home country as being such romantic a place, and likewise returning to it such a romantic experience. But once you touched down at the *Ḍaunmuang* Airport in Ḅạngkauk and had to go through that dog-gone of a traffic of that city, you soon face the reality of life which never is as what one thought.

Daiïs imagine their country as the most peaceful on earth, but we have some of the best species of murderer in the world.

In the end, 'Virtue is what virtue, not politeness, does'.

'That doesn't sound like you,' says she on 17 October, 'I thought the academic work is the least thing you would ever worry about'.

'*Mais oui!*', I think to myself.

'But within my research group,' I tell her, 'this way of thinking seems to be unthinkable. So I have to deceive myself that I do care the world my research'.

'Your email gives me a good laugh,' she says, 'thanks for the good beginning of today. Oh *ja*, I think you have an identity problem, or at least you have doubt about your identity'.

'Well, I don't know what I had written that made you laugh', I sound somewhat offended, 'Whatever it might be, it was never meant to be laughed at anyway, not in the first place. Though I am glad now that at least you have something to start your day good, even if it were at the expense of the integrity of my script'.

I believe only in heavenly not earthly identity. She needs never heed me.

Lanna interrupts with, 'I studied at the Montfort College too. My ID number when I studied in CU begins with 34. I have just come to Cambridge to do a PhD in Operations Management'.

And the topic of the conversation is in this manner unexpectedly switched into those of the more earthly ones, which could be of no interests to us here.

'I am an *Einzel-gänger*', Ellen, 18^{th} October 1996 . ('*Und ich auch!*')

It is at most five minutes by bike to anywhere within Cambridge for her, her college, the computer rooms, the library, *etc.*

'Yesterday I was actually sleeping while writing the mail to you', I tell her. 'I wrote about half way through, then I nodded off for about one or two hours, woke up again though not fully awake, continued with the writing, reread it just before sending, found out even I could make neither head nor tail of it, started to delete all the parts I did not understand thus reducing its size by half until it was what you saw, for then decided to send it without any further ado'.

'I am at uni today and have three classes', Asami, 24^{th} October 1996 . She had been in New Zealand as an AFS student and also knows Charlie. I invited her over to out university one day when there was a party at the Centennial Memorial Building.

The party got somewhat noisier after she had left as representatives from several countries went upon the stage to sing songs in their mother tongues. There were the Russians, the Chinese, Philipanios, Brazilians, some from one of the Arabic countries which I can never figure out the one from the other despite my having known several people from there, and so on.

I thought that the party lasted until about 8 pm, though I was not so sure either because I did not bring my wrist-watch along with me. It keeps coming off from the wrist of my right hand where I always put it, so I have been keeping it at home for fear that it would fall off while I am on my bicycle.

Ellen is being a vegetarian on and off. Now she is eating meats again, 30th October.

Ken has also written to Asim but gets no reply, or so he says today 12^{th} November 1996 . He sits in his office having a cold, and wish he had stayed at home this morning. A strong encouragement arrives from Ellen two days later, for she says, 'Intelligence cannot be measured in a narrow sense. Do have confidence in your ability, have faith in yourself'.

I should remember to do this.

Amazingly Rick, who is currently in the US and thriving, also has the same problem as myself. I have always thought that people in those countries respect individuality. Obviously I need to be more informed.

In a way I should have known this, for if they could bunch fifty countries together this easily how could you possibly expect individuality. Chains like the Mac Donald, for instance, are nothing but the *jidou hanbai ki* (automatic vending machines) in Japan.

He does not like the system there. 'For example,' he says, 'they want everyone in the same group to have blind unity and do things together. But I don't want unity, nor do I want to feel the group as being a family'.

According to what he says, they must be crazy over there too. I think what they really need is some training of martial art, such as would make them become a decent guru instead of a bully.

Now he needs to fix the stepping gear on the rear-wheel that has simply broken down.

Soon I become one year older. Ellen knows about this, so she consoles me on 21^{st} November 1996 saying, 'every old man has had his blooming youth, and every young kid is growing older'.

She goes on to tell me to keep my mental youth.

'Youth is a state of mind', she says. Listening to her I cannot help but sing to myself, 'You may be 40 but you can't stop rocking to the beat'.

Between us, she is the more spiritual who, in a way, is unusual as a woman for she believes in no fortune-tellers.

The autumn is here. I explore the city and go to the Tokyo Tower, to Hibiya Park where the colours in the flower beds and those of the leaves are beautiful beyond descriptions.

At the research room at TIT.

Furuta: I am very disappointed about you. You have failed to meet the deadlines I have set several times. I doubt your ability and I doubt the quality of your M.Sc. obtained from UMIST. That is to say that I don't think the Control Systems Centre there has got any passable standard.

Kit: I am sorry I made you think that way.

Furuta: What subjects did you learn during your Master's?

Kit: Classical control, modern control, signal processing, mathematics for control engineers, to mention but a few. Altogether approximately 15 subjects.

Furuta: Sounds very bad. Tell me what books were used for each course.

Kit: Can I make a list for you later? I cannot remember many of them. About five books were used for each subject. ['actually it was more than five', Kit]

Furuta: But you cannot remember the content? Then what was the purpose of using five books. Here we use only one. A better one than yours. And students are required to memorize it. They should do. And I say again that your course at UMIST is mediocre to ours. ['actually it is the other way round for all I know, if only I might judge', Kit; 'That, thou mayst not!', Jesus]

(after thinking, still flabbergasted from what he has heard)

Kit: But, how can one remember everything? Certainly there are things we can, and had better look up when we want to use.

Furuta: No, if you don't remember them then your knowledge is zero. What if you got stuck in an island without any book. Unless you can remember all, you don't know anything. I mean it.

Kit: (*thinking about the island conjecture, wondering whether there is any significant probability for the said situation to occur to all the control engineers on earth, and coming to the conclusion that were it be so one should attempt trying to be a good fisherman rather than to stubbornly persist in being a control engineer, but, having thought that far rather said*) I see. Then I might be too stupid, and PhD is not for me. I will think about it to see if I should consider quitting.

Furuta: With your brain level, which is very low, I don't think that you will be able to get a PhD from here.

Kit: Well, I don't mind if I don't get it. What ever happens is fine with me.

Furuta: You have ruined the reputation of UMIST and you have ruined the reputation of Cuĺạlongkaurn̤ University. All my previous

student from Cuĺa were the opposite to you. They were brilliant. Now my regard for UMIST is zero.

Kit: If you choose to think that way, what can I do. And if you can base your judgement for an institute on your judgement for only one of its students, then I have nothing else to say. For me, I think that I had better look at the university's research reports instead.

Furuta: Would you like me to tell the government to stop funding you?

Kit: That is beyond my power to decide. But yes, it is within yours and you could rightly do that. I wouldn't beg you against it, neither do I oppose to you if that happens to be what you have got in mind.

Furuta: You are in our team. You must copy the way that others in the team do things. I cannot afford having any unorthodox way of thinking and behaving around lest other students might follow it.

Kit: (*reminded of what he has read about some brain-washing social system*) I see! I am sorry. (*but for what? for stupidity? I thought that it was not a crime to be stupid!!!*) Yes, I am sorry sir.

I am in a *big* trouble!

Misfortune seldom comes singly. If you quarrel with your boss, whom you think tries to bully you, others will also try to do the same to you too, if simply for their own safety. We are all insecure creatures.

By 20^{th} January 1997 I have a trouble with one Vietnamese student in our group who is, I think, both jealous, selfish and mean. If he does not go away within one year, I think that I am leaving Japan. He always shows that he is better than me and jeers at me whenever other people turn their eyes away.

I used to have a similar problem with one British yob back in Manchester, as you would probably have recalled. This one here is a cunning imps who has a pair of eyes which at times look at me exactly like how a very serious psychic would do. Imagine ... no! I cannot work with him around. And even the idea that he might pop up at anytime frightens me a lot. I mean, this is not a zoo or an asylum, is it?

'To remember is to understand.'

This only means that remembering implies understanding. You may say that you understand something if you can remember it. But the opposite is not true, that is understanding does not necessarily imply remembering.

To this effect you may understand everything, and yet are able to remember nothing. For the same subject, I always get an A if the exams are opened-book

while if they are closed-book an F in its place.

Spare them Lord, for they know not what they do!

Each of them falls a prey to the pressure that he himself tries to put on others. It is a simple law of physics. You push at somebody, he pushes back at you. Even if you were to push at a chair. In this case it can never push back at you. God does that for it.

Sujin starts working as a lecturer at CU this week. Luk is working in Teddington.

In all the frenzy of her swotting, Ellen finds imagination enough to write on 23^{rd} January 1997 about, 'such a beautiful place where the sun is shining, and you can swim in the blue sea and lay on the white-sand beach, maybe under the huge coconut trees and enjoying the tropical fruits'.

And Rick is going to Arizona, Nevada and California next week.

None of these people are nomads. All of them are elites, but while working hard they also live their lives. Otherwise, the world would have been nothing but an asylum.

Nok is now back in Daiï teaching. I know *Lụkhyị* through *Mọ*. She is a lecturer in Pharmacy who works with *Mọ*'s mother at the *Tạkfā̱* Hospital in *Nàgaursvarrġ*.

I go to Shibuya on 29^{th} January 1997 wanting to buy a computer, but come back having bought in its place an electric piano.

Next week it will be delivered to my home. With it I will be able to practice whenever I feel like to, using the headphone. I will borrow some piano sheet-musics and books from local libraries and play them.

'After all, a degree is one thing and the experience of doing it another', I say to myself , 3^{rd} February 1997 , 'I value the experience more than the degree'.

I often think, '*Shigata ga nai*, Lord' (it cannot be helped). 'A supervisor may choose to be harsh'.

'Bullying' is in Japanese *ijime*, 'to bully' *ijimeru*, and 'bullied' *ijimerareta*.

There is nothing like a first-hand experience of anything.

On the 1^{st} there was a Peace Salon Concert.

'After having lived in Europe for almost 10 years, I am tired of Europe, tired of being a foreigner and the *non-belonging-anywhere* feeling', Ellen, 14^{th} February 1997 . She is both homesick and worried about her parents.

'But I am afraid that this idea is just an illusion,' she carries on, 'having lived in Europe for such a long time, I don't know whether I can get used to the Asian way of life again'.

I know what she means, for I have felt the same. You lose some of your ambitions, but do not want to admit it.

But on the other hand, are all ambitions not meant to be lost? If only we knew how to lay each and every one of them down with grace, and neither plonking them down nor fallen in disgrace.

I want to drive a car from Japan to Daiï, passing through China, and for this I want to find a sponsor. But I have no contacts, and that is the problem. It is a dream that currently occupies my mind, and so I talk about it with people whom I know, which are namely Aggy, Ai, B, Ball, *Bhạvan*, *Bongśx*, the two Boy's, Bug, *Cọ̀*, *Dẹb*, Dharrm, God [from Godzilla], *Ḥaun*, Hiroko, *Ḥūï*, Jane, *Jāun*, Jaï, Jiang, *Kái*, *Kàng*, *Kṛiṣṇ*, Lek, *Mhụ*, *Namọ*, Nas, *Nhăuï*, *Nhŭeng*, Nok, *Ọ́*, *Òn*, *Pạu*, *Pelé*, *Pùm*, *Tàm*, *Tị* and *Ỵhăị*, and also possibly to *Dīü*, *Mhoaï* and (another) *Nhăuï*.

Ellen thinks, on 19^{th} February 1997 , that it is not too dangerous to drive in China. But the road is very tough, or she guesses there may be no road at all in some of the places. She says she could ask some Chinese to see if it is feasible, and if it is she wants to come along with me. It is going to be adventurous and exciting, she thinks. But she wonders whether we could survive.

I may not even be able to look after myself on such a trip. Now that she might join me, I suddenly fear for her safety, and I imagine the various situations where I may need to die for her.

I do not know how to attack someone. But it would be impossible to try to protect somebody without attacking some other people. Martial Arts train your reflex actions, which is governed by the subconscious mind which in turn never attacks. Therefore those Arts that attacks for the sake of doing damage to others are either tainted or mistaken.

Ellen wants to bring more people into this. But for me, apart from the welcomed sponsors I would rather go alone. I know how to operate cameras, and I could cook. I am interested in languages, and mechanics.

She is from China, but to me she belongs to something bigger, that is the Whole. Wholly holy, any country would be too small for her.

'Little countries ain't small', or so a friend of mine jests.

'Have you heard about a story that one person was so thirsty that he drank the poisonous water to reduce his thirst, even though he knew that the water was poisonous,' she says, 'I am in a similar situation, but with a less degree of *thirst*'.

We poison one another. Earthly things always find reasons to kill their heavenly brothers. What they do not realise is that they can also be equally heavenly. If they did, they would never have killed.

I think that without a job, I would soon get bored. Much the same way that I would, if I do not swim. Without a wife and friends I think I will be very lonely. And I would love to watch my own child grows up. It would be more meaningful than having a most successful career.

Tomoko is studying psychology at the Gakushuin University. She will get a job and not go to the graduate school, 27th February.

She had been an AFS student in New Zealand. Surely the Cold War ended because of the ambassadorial AFS students like us, not by the arm races.

Ellen is going to the US. She is worried about the earthquakes in San Francisco and the crime rate in New York.

On Sunday 9th March 1997 *Ṭhing* and I together try the Yurikamome line.

I walk around in Shiba Ura, looking at the monorail and the Rainbow Bridge. I visit the Shiba *kouen* (park) where the Zoujou *ji* (temple) is. I walk past the Kyouritsu *yakuka* (department of medicine) University. Then I meet *Ṭhing* at the railway station from where our train starts.

Between 16 and 25 March 1997 with the Seishun-18 ticket in my pocket I go to Kyūshū.

On the first day of the trip I pass Atami, then visit the Nagoya *jou* (castle). The moat is all dried up and there are a few sheep grazing in it.

But the masonries here are amazing. The corner stones define the sharp edges of the high walls which rise in slopes of accelerating steepness to the top of the walls where you stand watch.

This castle is a classic example of the Japanese Art. The copper-plated roofs are all green from oxidation.

Two *shachihoko*'s guard the two topmost hips. They look as though they had jumped up from the moats and landed there on their chin.

All the sakura trees in the garden stands naked with neither leaves nor flowers. Nagoya is the third big capital of Japan.

The following day, 17th March, I see the Seto *naikai* (inland sea) which sits amidst the *honshū* (main island), *Kyūshū* and Shikoku.

It is known in English as the Inland Sea of Japan. There is a long bridge connecting the Main Island to Shikoku.

I get off at Hiroshima and walk across the Kyoubashi *gawa* (river) until I reach the *gembaku* (atomic bomb) Dome.

Here stood the *sangyou shourei kan* (Industrial Promotion Building) until 6^{th} August 1945 when it found itself within 150-metre radius of the first atomic bomb that men use against ourselves.

There can be no less than 53 bridges in Hiroshima where the *Ōta* River

branches in to five different rivers that enter the sea.

I visit the park in the memorial to those 200,000 people who died because of that bomb. It is in the vicinity of the Dome, on the other side of the river where there is also a museum to visit.

Then I go to the Hiroshima Castle and climb the steps up to where the beautiful castle stands. From here you see a good view of the city.

After Hiroshima it is the Seto Inland Sea again. We pass a place called Yamaguchi and then Shimonoseki.

Hiroshima was completely flattened, but it was innocent human beings here who faced the worst of the atrocities. The Hiroshima Castle was incinerated, evaporated.

In 1952 some American soldiers were visiting the Dome the ruins of which were otherwise fenced off. What you see standing in its place is the ghost of its former self raised up in 1958.

In 1959 at the *heiwa kinen kouen* (peace memorial park) there gathered for the *heiwa koudou* (peace movement) people from among other places the European Federation Against Atomic Armaments, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Hungary, the USSR, and Yugoslavia. Banners were held which say, '*Gensuibaku kinshi!*' (stop the atomic and hydrogen bombs). The works for preserving the Dome in its present form was carried out in 1967.

On the 18$^{\text{th}}$ of March which follows I am in Nagasaki and walk across the *Ōhashi* to the *heiwa kouen* (peace park). Here the Peace Statue sits like the Zeus, with the right hand pointing towards the sky and the left towards the left, the gesture of which may be written in the Romanised system of American Sign Language (ASL) that I created in 2002 as '*bumebemuwiu*'. Here a group of students, who come here on their *shūgaku ryoukou* (school trip), stand in rows to have their group photos taken.

I go to the *Shūhou jinja* (Shinto shrine) where you walk up some steps to reach the front gate. Then I go to the Glover Garden from where you can see the beautiful views of the Nagasaki Harbour in which I see some ships and tankers.

In the garden there are flowers, for instance the *mokuren* (lily magnolia, *Magnolia liliflora*) and the tulips the growing and the bulbs of which became a mania during the early 17$^{\text{th}}$ century in Holland.

The *romen densha* (streetcars or trams) are still in use here. The last time I saw one was in Budapest in 1990, so I am all excited about it when I see them here.

Then I look at the site of the former Dutch trading post on Dejima. Founded in 1634, the real site has the area of approximately 4,000 *tsubo* (3.954 sq.yd. or approximately 3.3 sq.m.) and the Dutch traders were moved

there.

I walk along a canal lined by weeping willows.

There is also the *megane* (glasses) Bridge, itself and the reflection of which form and image that looks like a pair of round spectacles.

I stay at the Youth Hostel tonight. This morning I have already met my friend Yukari who is from here. She has given me some suggestions on what to do. It was her who suggested the Glover Garden.

On 19th March I go to the Unzen National Park where there is the *jigoku* (*lit* hell), which is the area where there are large grounds of geothermal activities.

There is a monument of Christian Martyrs.

Vegetation here include the *sasa* (bamboo grass) that covers the ground, and the *akamatsu* (*lit* red pine, *Pinus densiflora Sieb. et Zucc.*). The latter is found in all the four biggest islands of Japan.

The word *matsu* means *pine* (*Pinus*). Japan originally had two types of pine, one is the *akamatsu* mentioned above while the other is the *kuromatsu* (*lit* black pine, *Pinus thunbergii Parl.*).

I climb up to the Ya *take* (peak). The sun is shining brightly and summer is in the air. This peak is unique. Sitting here you can see around you on all sides, and yet it does not feel like a bald peak because immediately below all around are trees.

There is a golf course below and by the town is a lake. It is warm up here because of the sun, but the breezes are cool. A good place it is, for a *hinatabokko* (sunbathing).

Down below I walk around the thermal grounds again. There is the *baba* (old woman) Rocks that seems to be nothing in particular.

The boiling mud really boils. Steam vents from every nook to tell us that it is very hot underground.

I have come here on a bus from Nagasaki and will be catching the returning one in the evening. At the National Park's Visitor Centre I sit in the sun waiting for the bus to arrive. There is here a bed where the *habotan* (ornamental kale) is grown. Nearby is the Gensei *numa* (marsh).

Back in Nagasaki I climb up the ill to look at the city at night.

On Thursday 20th March, the following day, I catch the train to Fukaoka.

Here I visit the Nishi *kouen* (park), from where you can see the sea and the express way along it. Then I go to the *Ōbori* Park, Fukuoka *shiroato* (site or ruins of a castle) from where one can see the Fukuoka Dome,

I retrace my steps to Kurume, which is from Fukuoka in the direction of Nagasaki, and here look at the Kurume Castle.

From here back to *Honshū* I take the less frequented line which passes through the forests in the heart of *Kyūshū*, passing among other stations Mii, Tanushimaru, Yoake, Amagase, Yunohira, Kaku, and then *Ōita* and Beppu. The train passes through ten tunnels.

This is no place for everyday's tourists, so it is much different from Nagasaki, or even Unzen. It is not only the nature but also the solitude of the places we pass, the slow paces of life, and that sincere, non-competing country feeling, that I soon fall in love with this place even though I only manage to see one third of it by the time it gets dark. And with the love of the place follows that love of this land, Japan.

So the first time I tell my self that this is definitely a lovable country and culture is here, somewhere between the stations Kurume and Yoake, which include namely and respectively Minami Kurume, Mii, Zendouji, Chikugo Kusano, Tanushimaru, Chikugo Yoshii, Chikugo Zenzoku, and Chikugo *Ōi*.

After this the world outside the train is dark and I can no longer see the countryside. But the local people still get on and off the train and their talks I still overhear that tell the tales. It is no stories of their lives that I try to make out, but the way they think and how their minds are shaped by this exquisite setting of their *furusato* (home).

The following day, 21st March, I get off the train and walk around in Karuga, Miyoshi, Bingo Ochiai, Toujou, and Niimi, which means that I criss-cross into the southern part of Honshū instead of going along the main lines on the eastern coast. Then another day is over.

On 22^{nd} March 1997 , a Saturday, I meet in Nara Emiko, who had also been an AFS student in New Zealand, and her friend.

They show me around the city. We go to the Koufuku *ji* (temple) which was founded in AD 710. Then we visit the Toudai Temple where there is the Daibutsu, the Buddha image built in AD 751 which is the biggest wooden structure in the world. Both the Koufuku and the Toudai temples are among the seven big temples in Nambu of Edo.

We walk in the Nara Park where there are *shika* (deer, Cervus nippon) around.

The deer found in Japan are normally the *enji shika* (*Cervus nippon yesoensis*). This is the same group as those deer found in China, for examples *C. n. mandarinus*, *C. n. grassianus*, and *C. n. kopschi*.

In Japan there are also other types of deer, for instance the *kyūshuu. jika* (*C. n. nippon*), *kerama jika* (*C. n. keramae*), and *yaku shika* (*C. n. yakushimae*).

Those deer found in Taiwan are called *taiwan jika* (*C. n. taiouanus*).

Purikura (print club) are those sticker-making booth you see on the street

and wherever young people are expected to be found. You get into a booth, put in some coins, choose the background picture and who know what, and then look at the camera while it takes your picture. The print-out comes off in the 10×13 cm, that is in the metric units, containing 16 pictures that come in four rows. But the sizes of each picture, however, are in inch, that is to say, $\alpha \times \beta$ where $\alpha = 15/16$ inch and $\beta = \alpha/\sqrt{2}$.

On 23rd March I come to Kyoto. Here I visit the Nishi Hongan Temple and the Nijou Castle. There are some *tsubaki* (camellia, *Camellia japonica*) in the castle.

On street along my way here I saw for the first time the vending machine that sells men's magazines and sex videos.

Then I walk along the Marutamachi Road to the Old Imperial Palace After it is dark I walk to the eastern part of the city and walk around the hill there. It is a long walk, and the drizzles have come, so today is rather exhausting for me.

From here I go to Koube and explore the town at night.

On 24th March I explore Ōsaka. I walk along the Dojima River and see some students wearing the kimono taking pictures on their graduation. Then I walk to the Ōsaka Castle with its wide moats which remind me of the Royal Palace in Tokyo. From within the castle you can see the Nissei Stadium.

Walking in the castle I meet three girls who ask me to take a picture for them. We talk together and I take one picture of us using my the tiny tripod that I have. We decide that we shall do things together for the rest of the day, and thereby I walk with them to the Yodo River and then to the twin buildings that is connected to each other on top. We go up to the upper floor to look at the world from the bird's-eye view. Then I walk with them to the Ōsaka Station because they have to leave for Tokyo.

After they have gone I walk around until it gets dark, and then explore the Dojima River at night. Then I come back to the station and stay in a capsule hotel for the first time. These hotels are interesting. Instead of a room or a bed you only have a hole on the wall to sleep in. Employees come here to sleep if they drink until too late to get home.

On the 25th I go to Fukui and have a look at the Fukui Castle. On the train from Fukui to Kanazawa to Kurobe you can see the mountain ranges with the snow-covered mountains. From Kurobe to Noetsu the train goes along the coast. I walk around in Noetsu and then catch the train back to Tokyo.

During my trip I have missed the sakura-bloomings by only a matter of weeks.

Ellen writes on 21^{st} March 1997 . Ellen philosophises whenever she is bored and tired. When she is filled with ambition she always feel like being a student in economics again. 'Many economists believe that they have a mission to

change the world for better,' she says.

She tells me that people live their lives differently and everyone has different experiences, but we all think and live alike. Human beings feel uncomfortable if they are different. She wants to be different but she fears loneliness.

'Loneliness is the common feeling of all great creators. If you could create the world, you would experience the God's loneliness', she quotes.

But I think that God is beyond everything because he is all things, the Superset. Therefore, regarding happiness, He is happiness but not vice versa, that is to say, happiness is not him.

And likewise loneliness and other things, in fact everything in the universe.

The two sayings, namely that *there can be only one god*, and that *God is the Superset*, are equivalent to each other.

To prove this, first let A be the first sentence and B the second. It is easy to see that B implies A, that is if God is the Superset then there can be only one god.

To prove the remaining condition, A implies B, suppose the contrary, A but not B, that is there is one god but this god is not the Superset. Then the Superset necessarily contains the god, and therefore it is also a god and a different one since it has, say, one atom more than the other. This contradicts with our first assumption A, so it could never be. Therefore A and B are equivalent to each other.

Spring has come to Cambridge overnight sometime during the third week of March. Again it is Ellen on 26^{th} March 1997 who wrote me the following.

> 'Suddenly the sky become so high and blue, the sun shines, the trees blooms and the grass turns into green. People take off their thick, heavy clothes and walk around in light ones, with their mood also light. The tiny city centre is always filled by groups of tourists coming by coach. Punts start to float in the river Cam again'.

She would not mind doing a PhD here simply to enjoy the atmosphere. She thinks that only students may enjoy atmospheres, since they do not have to fight for their lives. She is in a dilemma that whenever she has the mood she never has the time, but when she finally has the time she no longer has the mood.

'I realise that it is me who make thing go against my wish,' she says, 'Anyway, life is simple and easy when you don't try to reason it'.

I tell *Ọ́* that when I was in *Kyūshū* I sometimes slept on the floor at a train station. I feel very safe in Japan where nobody robs or steals things from you.

But *Ọ́* thinks otherwise. She says on 2^{nd} April that she wish she were a man

so that she could do some outrageous things like that. To her, this country is too dangerous. Even in her everyday life she has met with drunken or mad people, molesters, sexual harassments, and Yakusa gangsters.

The following day my father writes when he says, 'You are very lucky that you have been to many places in Japan. I hope you enjoy life there'.

From the end of March onwards Tokyo is filled with the *sakura* (cherry) blossoms.

On the 28th I meet at TIT with *Mọ*, *Pạu* and *Tàm* for the *hanami* (cherry blossom viewing).

On 31st March I go to the Ueno Park where you find yourself under a continuous canopy of the sakura.

After that I goto Shijuku and explore the streets and buildings there. I go up to the 53rd floor of the Shinjuku Centre Building where there is the *muryou* (free) *tenboudai* (observation platform). From up here you can look at the beautiful view of the Meiji *jingū* (shrine). Then I go to another building, the Sumitomo, and go up to the 51st floor to watch the sunset.

After it is dark I explore the area at night and climb up the Nomura Building.

On 10^{th} April 1997 there is a fair at the university where all the clubs introduce their activities. I have a look around and find at least two of them interesting. One of them is the mountaineering and skiing clubs, another the boat (canoe) club.

I go with the boat club to a river together with a group of many first year students, and try my hand on canoeing for the first time. I liked it very much and plan to do more canoeing with them. We are here at the river from afternoon until the sun set. The weather is perfect and the atmosphere is nice with the romantic sun setting. The feel of the wind against your body, together with the boat cutting its way across the water, uplift your spirit.

On 12th April there is a meeting at the Jigen Temple for those who want to help organise the Daiï *songkrạn* (water-pouring) festival here tomorrow. Here I meet Megumi who has also come to help.

At night I explore Shibuya and look at the street lights. I am only going to perform the black-light *blaung*s.

On 13th April the *songkrạn* (water-pouring) festival goes smoothly.

Goang blaung probably already existed during the *Ȧyudhyạ* Period (15th–18th century). *Blaung fai* (torch-*blaung*) is probably an *Ȧyudhyạ* adaptation of the *goang blaung*.

Around 1980 Drongsatỳa introduced the black-light *blaung*, and around 1981 *Ratnȧjaïśrị*, then the drum-major of the school marching band of the

Montfort College, trained by the *saṃnak ḍạḅ* (sword school) *Śrị Ȧyudhyạ*, were performing the flag-*blaung*, which is essentially the spinning of the *blaung* (pole) with a flag. A very long pole was used for this, and his flag was huge.

In March 2000 *Gịtbarrṇạ* and *Kittiśakd́xi Nhŭï Tịïbandḣ* introduced the flags-*blaung* which uses two flags for each pole, and used it to perform *A Night at the Opera* at the Oriental Hotel in Bạngkauk on the 18th and the 19th.

It is possible to write the last name above in Daiï as '*tyaban*', and this can also be the Japanese word which is the same as '*chaban*' the Japanese pronunciation of which is very similar to the English, 'Japan'.

Nhan teaches *Yhị* who has recently graduated to become a physician. On 29th April she tells me that he is going to the UK after the graduation to study sport medicine.

May passes by without much events. *Ọ́* also has an electric piano. But she only plays pop musics now.

Ỵhing starts teaching Daiï to seven Japanese on 4th April at the *Ḅurbạ* University.

Ellen might go to San Francisco in September. She needs to find a job soon. Meanwhile, 10^{th} July 1997 , she has just come back with her flat mates from a walk. She says, 'We went to the coffee shop 'Clowns' for cakes and coffee and then took a walk around the King's college, watching people punting on the River Cam. The sun is shining brightly, trees and green green grass radiate laziness'.

I have been teaching Daiï to Hiroko who is a most diligent student and is doing very well. She teaches me Japanese in return, but I am not as good a student as she is.

It is interesting how one gains more understanding by teaching. The process of pulling everything together before one expounds them to someone is essential to the learning of the teacher.

When her turn comes, she would let me read some article from a newspaper and then she would correct me as I go along. The trouble is, I never do any revision or homework and I never remember anything after our lessons. She shows me an advertisement of a part-time job to teach swimming at a *chū gakkou* (intermediate school), and I go there to apply.

It is now the summer holidays and in Japan the hottest month is August. When it is hot, it is humid and hot and humid. There is nowhere you can escape to, unless you are in an air-conditioned room. Nakaura stays at our laboratory day and night, so he is happy because the room is air-conditioned.

I teach swimming from 28–30 July, then 6 and 8 August 1997. Our students are from 12 to 15 years old, both boys and girls. I find it hard to believe at

first that anyone here should be unable to swim. I thought that everyone must have already learnt how to swim since their younger years here in Japan.

Between 31st July and 3rd August 1997 I join a home-stay programme of the Young Women Christian Association and in Shizuka Ken stay at Yoriko and Mitsuru's place.

Paum comes back from Ḅaṇgkauk around 5th August. She has changed to a new supervisor in Spring. Now she works for a British advisor, on live video technology, and image processing. She plays tennis, white water rafts, and goes to the amusement park. On the 8th she says that she likes Osaka but not Tokyo, though she has couple of friends studying here.

Between 10 and 14 August 1997 I travel by the Seishun-18 ticket again, this time to Hokkaido in the north.

On Sunday 10th I board the train from the Senzoku station without showing anybody my ticket because there is still no one at the entrance this early. This is one of the rare stations in Tokyo where there are no turnstiles.

It is a nice day, and the air makes you feel so fresh. I like the trains outside Tokyo because you have the seats that face along the direction of the railway line, instead of facing sidewise with your back against the window as is the case with the trains in big cities.

It is a long ride. We only stop a few times when I change trains, and at these occasions I manage to walk around, to a river in general.

In the upper part of *Honshū* the main railway lines do not follow the eastern coast-line. Therefore I travel inland, among the mountains, until I reach Akita. From here I go further seven stations to as far as Hachirougata when the train stops. I will have to wait here for the first train tomorrow.

It is already pitch dark when I arrive here. I only manage to find a corner on the platform to spread my sleeping-bag, climb inside it and go to sleep. There is another student doing a similar thing, but he sleep outside, beside the entrance. You are not supposed to climb over the low fence to sleep on the platform as I did, but nobody cares. I feel safer in here, and I am causing no troubles besides. Anyway a small town like this is better than a big city like Akita if you have to be on the street.

I wake up in the morning not long before the first train departs. It is cloudy today, Monday 11th. Outside the station there is a long stretch of mural mosaics which is simply wonderful.

From Akita you may also take a train to Oka in the Oka Peninsula. Not far from Hachirougata is the Hachirougata reclaimed land and tideland lake. The water is regulated through a channel between Tennou and Funakoshi stations.

Nothing is what it seems. Nowhere can you find a better example for this

than in Japan. Japanese people never knows how to read the names of each other, that is to say, they are never certain how the *kanji* (Chinese characters) are to be read in proper names. For example, if you look up the 'O' in the town's name 'Oka' in your dictionary you may find the instruction for reading it as *dan* or *nan*.

'Then wherefore the *O*?', you may ask, and it is well that you should ask, for often nobody knows.

In theory you can read anything any way you like. Or vice versa, you may write anything and then dictate with the *hiragana* or *katagana* (Japanese syllables or syllabic systems) how you want it read.

By the time I reach Hirosaki it has already rained. There are still some drizzles. It is somewhat better by the time we are in Aomori, and I walk to the sea. This town is in a bay. From here the train goes to Kanita where I walk to the sea.

The street is on an embankment. There are breakwaters both on the shore below this and further away off-shore. Houses are built right to the very sea.

The train leaves from here and then enter the tunnel which links *Honshū* and Hokkaidou. This is the Tsugarukaikyou line. The tunnel is very long, more than a hundred kilometre, and goes very deep down. There are three stations underground. The one in the middle is at the deepest point and has some kind of museum.

The carriage is both new and modern. We are shown a video explaining the construction of the tunnel, and how it descends to the deepest point and then climbs up again towards the opposite island. This tunnel is called 'Seikan', *sei* being the same as the *ao* in 'Aomori', and similarly *kan* the *hako* in 'Hakodate'. We leave the Tsugaru *hantou* (peninsula) behind.

It is raining when we arrive in Hokkaidou. At Hakodate the streets are all wet, but it is only drizzling now.

From here we stop at *Ōnuma* which sits between two lakes, and then carry on further until we are in Ebetsu past Sapporo, the biggest city in Hokkaidou. I sleep in my sleeping-bag as usual, in the main lounge of the railway station.

There is a police station nearby which never closes, you can see it from this station. You can see the light and the police in there at night, which is inviting especially when it is cold.

It rains and drizzles all night and all the streets are wet.

The morning of Tuesday 12^{th} is still cloudy when I board the first train bound for Asahikawa. From here I travel to Wakkanai on a local route which is less busy because it is not a loop that connects to other places. Such a route is infinitely better than the more frequented ones. You see less people and the pace of life becomes suddenly slower.

From here we pass Asahigawayojou, Shinasahikawa, and then I get off and walk about at Nagayama.

I have with me the Japanese Railway's book of timetables and maps that I have borrowed from the Senzoku *eki* (station). It is not the current one, but everything seems to remain the same.

We then pass Kitanagayama, Minamipippu, Pippu, Kitapippu, Unru, Shiokari, Wassamu, Higashirokusen, Kenbuchi, Kitasenbuchi, Shibetsu, Shimoshibetsu, Tayoru, Mizuho, Fūren, Higashifūren, before we arrive in Nayoro where I again get off and walk.

From here on the train goes pass Nisshin, Chitou, Hokusei, Chiebun, Chihoku, Minamibifuka, Bifuka, Hatsuno, Monbanai, Onnenai, Toyoshimisu, Teshiogawaonsen, Sakkuru, Otoineppu, Osashima, Saku, Teshionakagawa, Shimonakagawa, Utanai, Toikanbetsu, Nukanan, Kamionoppunai, then through a tunnel to Onoppunai, Yasuushi, Minamihoronobe, Kamihoronobe and Horonobe.

The Tenshio *sanchi* (mountainous district) is to our left while that of Kitami to our right.

From here on our left is the nature reserve of Sarobetsu wilderness or moor. This is the famous and romantic Sarobetsu Alpine Wildflower Refuge, to some westerners at least. We pass through Shimonuma, then Toyotomi where the train stops for a while, and then Tokumitsu, Oshikawa, Kabutonuma, Yuuchi, Bakkai, Minamiwakkanai and finally Wakkanai.

The last stretch becomes rather hilly, and then between the last two stations the train suddenly swerve to the left and a breath-taking panorama of the sea comes into view on the right-hand side window of the coach.

Wakkanai is on the Noshappu Cape. It is a town on the coast surrounded by low hills. Across the bay to the east of it is the of Souyami *saki* (promontory) which is the northernmost point in Hokkaido. On the east of this part of the island is the Sea of Okhotsk while on the west the Sea of Japan.

One of the teachers we have in our Japanese language class at TIT is from Hokkaidou and graduated from the Sapporo University. He draws the map of Hokkaidou (Hokkaido) as a square standing on its corner.

Hokkaidou is known for its Kita-kitsune (northern fox, *Vulpes vulpes schrencki*). *Vulpes vulpes* is the red fox or the common fox found in Asia, Europe, North Africa and North America. There are two types of these in Japan, and the other one is the Hondo fox, *Vulpes vulpes japonica.*

Because of the limited sounds available in the language, Japanese place names may sometimes provide something on which to ponder. For instance if somebody asks you where you went to and you say, '*Wakkanai*', he may take it to mean that you do not know where you had been because the word can be the shortened from of '*Wakaranai!*' (No idea!). And the name of the town

Utanai already mentioned literally means 'in a song', but unless we know how it is written it can also mean 'no songs'. Well, you could perhaps say that a song is no songs is a song.

It is already dark by the time we have traced our way back to Otoineppu. The station and the car park in front it are deserted. It rains in Asahikawa tonight.

Wednesday 13^{th} August 1997 I go to Sapporo and walk around the city for a while. From here I change train once at Chitoki and then again at Oshamanbe. It is getting dark when I reach Hakodate.

I meet two girls and decide to join them on the bus up to the top of Mt Hakodate. The view of the city lights from up here is supposed to be spectacular, but tonight there is fog everywhere and we can see little if at all.

Hakodate lies towards the very southern part of the Oshima Peninsula, at the eastern nook in the Hakodate *wan* (bay). Here Japanese settlers came in the 13^{th} century and Russian visitors in 1740. A foreign enclave was established at Motomachi here in 1854.

Goryoukaku is the castle built in European style with a pentagonal plan. It was built in 1865 for the government in Edo. During 1868–9 loyalists of the Tokugawa shogunate fought and lost their last battle against the Meiji imperial army.

This city is well-known for the Trappists who live here. Their convent on the west of the city is now famous for its cookies. These are Cistercian monks who are bound by vows of perpetual silence and austerity according to the monastery order of the same name which was founded at Cîteaux by Robert de Molesmes in 1098 as a reformed branch of the monastic order by St Benedict. The place is now Saint-Nicolas-lès-Cîteaux in Côte-d'Or. A particular example is Saint Bernard who professed it in 1113.

The bus driver feels sorry for us because the weather is not good. But on our way back while we are coming down the mountain, the fog has cleared away sufficiently in one place for us to be able to see the city light, and the sight is truly beautiful.

The driver stops the bus to let us look at this through our window. Five minutes later and we are off again. That was a long stop in the middle of the road, but we are happy and grateful for what he did.

There are about five people on the bus, and we can sit in any place we like. I change my seat several times, always keeping close to the side away from the mountain in order to see the views.

Back in Hakodate we board the ferry, the *Bēda*, late that night. There is a room where we sit on a raised, low platform in the middle, having taken our shoes off first. This is infinitely better than having to sit up in a seat all night. The temperature in here is just right, though I could do with something a

little warmer. There is plenty of elbow-room, and if you are tired you can simply lie down on your back and sleep.

With the twilight of Thursday 14 August 1997 we reach Aomori. The dawn is beautiful. There are some clouds in the sky and it is quite cold. I am in my shorts and sandals, and so cannot help shivering from time to time.

Risa, Chika and I sit together on a plastic mat provided by Risa. We sit on the pier with our face towards the east, for the sun is going to come up soon.

It turns out that the sun is the anticlimax. The tranquillity and the lovably gentle colours soon give way to the harsh and bright light. I like it better when the sun was still under the horizon.

The Pacific Plate collides with the Asian Plate and raises the islands of Japan up from the sea, and the same is true with the islands of Okinawa. In their collision the former gradually moves down into the interior of the earth while the latter becomes creased.

On Friday 15$^{\text{th}}$ August I arrive in Nikkou (Nikko). I walk to the river where there is a Lion Do supermarket, and climb up the mountain in the fog.

It was actually a well established hiking track. But it was quite exciting after all. The mountain was very nice there.

On the way down from the summit the track got so steep in quite a few places and one had to get down by sliding down while holding on to the ropes which were already there.

It was drizzling the whole while too.

Along the gorge at one point there is a wide path lined with figures sculpted from rock and clad with red clothes on their head and front part of the body.

The path leads me back towards the town, and before it the historical shrine.

There are many big wooden structures and big, tall trees. The ground is also large. You cannot help but feel yourself dwarfish with the straight, tall trees and all the structures towering above your head.

Back on the street there is the gorge, river and the red bridge.

'I'll be back!', says Arnold Schwarzsnecker in Die Hard II.

Paum's Fall Semester starts on 25$^{\text{th}}$ August. She has taken a guitar course last Spring and at the end of the semester played in a recital.

'I will take her white-water rafting this weekend,' she says on 21$^{\text{st}}$ August, 'We planed to go to one of the cavern up state, and then go rafting on Hudson river'.

That sounds fun. I wish I were there.

'For your fun and fight again', my brother ends his letter on the 26$^{\text{th}}$.

On 12^{th} September 1997 , 'So I just tried in the court,' my friend says again from the Syracuse and she means it because she likes playing the tennis.

From the third week of August until the second week of September I learn *kyūdou* (Japanese archery) every weekend. Even my trip to the conference in Singapore has to be limited to a mere five days in order that I may miss no *kyūdou* lessons.

On Sunday 31^{st} August 1997 I board the plane at Narita to go to Singapore, arrive there the following day, and come back on Friday 5^{th} September.

In kyudo one distinguishes between skilful shooting and shooting with the right mind-set. If you do it with techniques you only improve the shooting, but if you do it with spirit yourself is improved.

In kyudo, feeling is everything while techniques is nothing. One never envies a better archer.

Success also means nothing, because there is no such thing as a perfect shot. There is always ample room for improvement. Those who are satisfied with their success tend always to repeat the same thing over and over lest they should fail. In other words they become trapped in their success.

In kyudo, therefore, disappointment by failure becomes out of question. The end result means nothing, the process of learning everything.

As kyudo comprises the essence of all other Japanese martial arts, this attitude permeates the whole society. An example of this is in the field of manufacturing electrical appliances, where a new model is always different from existing ones no matter how good the latter may already be.

For a disinterested shooter the arrow may hit the target, while for a professional archer the former pierces the latter.

Yet for a philosophical archer the arrow *exists* in the target. It belongs there even before it leaves your bow.

The archer reflects upon himself. And since he is one with the arrow, bow and target, unconsciously his reflection also affects these three. For an ancient archer who practices *kyūjutsu* (bow techniques) it may be sufficient if the arrow pierces the target, but for someone who practices *kyūdou* (bow way) the arrow always exists in the target.

But even the ancient Japanese archer also values the mind higher than he does the technique.

In Japan we believe that, '*Nana korobi, ya oki*', that is to say, 'Fail seven times, eight times up you get'. You are never disheartened by failures, they are necessary.

There are also sayings, '*Akirameta yo*' (You are beaten!), then '*Nanisama akirameta*' (Why am I beaten?), '*Akiramerarenu to akirameta*' (If you say you

shall never be beaten, then you are already beaten).

On Sunday 14^{th} September 1997 there is a *kyūdou* competition, the 36^{th} sport festival of the Meguro ward. This is held at the Komazawa Olympic Park.

At 8 am I meet with one of my seniors, and together we go to the place. First there is a parade, and then we walk in a line to the shooting ground.

I do badly in the individual category, ranking over 30^{th}. No one wants to team up with me in the team category.

Everyone wants to do well, and to win, even in *kyūdou* where winning is by no mean the aim, neither is the high score in general. So, you see, I am doing all right really even though I may have finished nearly last, because I understand *kyūdou*. As long as you carry out the motion correctly and naturally, and become one with your bow and arrow, then no results matter.

In the end someone comes and seeks me out, in fact two do because we are in the same shoes. Hiroshi, Jirou and I become the team which has the least hope of ever winning, and I have the honour of being the leader of the team.

What I do as a leader, however, is only to walk in front of everybody, which is two in this case. I set the pace, and everyone follows. The leader sees no one behind him while everyone looks at him all the time.

In *kyūdou*, where the only important thing is to let go of the need to win and simply let your subconscious mind do all the action as it has been trained, nothing else can be that important. But still the leader can set the mind of his teammates on the right track by showing his determination and defiance of all expectations.

My first arrow goes astray, and all from the other two behind me follow suit.

When the second round comes I slowly take a deep breath.

Nothing matters to me now. I shall become one with my bow and arrow, and that shall suffice.

Let them have all the trophies in the world.

With this attitude in my mind, my eyes become off-focused and I feel myself one not only with the bow and arrow but also with the target. I judge my position and then simply let one action lead to another. Let your subconscious mind learn and adjust itself. It is better than all the time criticising and instructing it.

The arrow I let go hits the bull's-eye. I do not even have to look, I know it by the sound. The other two people in my team also hit the bull's-eye, and they carry on hitting it every time hereafter even though I have already had my one and only hit of the day.

We came second, which amazes everyone else myself included.

Paum says on 22^{nd} September 1997 that she has a closed-book examination coming up on Thursday. The week before last she went to LA.

Her supervisor has given her a new computer to be proud of. It is a fully-loaded notebook, a Toshiba, Pentium 100, with 4 GB of harddisk space.

Only a year ago the best PCs were still KBs and the GB something unheard-of.

Paum is very good at tennis, and she plays for the Syracuse University. In Daiï my parents and sister have just returned from *Bhụket* where they stayed in a room which looks on to the beach.

October, the present government of Daiï is said to be corrupt.

Nhan is buying a house in *Jiangmhăi* by instalment. I do not understand why she buys it, since she works in *Songkhlạ* which is nearly two thousand kilometres away on land.

Paum does not like swimming that much, but she can swim. She plans to go to Alaska, San Antonio and New Orleans.

'In Hawaii,' she says, 'more people speak Japanese than English'. Her *English* probably means *American.*

Ellen is back from Vienna. She graduated from Cambridge, then went to Paris and then to San Francisco with her sister. There they stayed for two months. She loves both the diverse cultures of the place and the coast along the Pacific Ocean.

I have heard some news about air-pollutions in Singapore, so I ask Gee Wah. But he replies on 7^{th} October that the haze there is not so bad, for it is still possible to breathe normally.

Through her work *Mọ* has been to Lạö and she likes it there.

My father buys a new car around 10^{th} October. Hearing about this I think to myself, 'Hell, no!' This, together with his insisting earlier that I bring my friend Megumi home with me, seems to confirm my fear that he thinks that I wanted to marry her.

I try my best to satisfy all the parties, so I entertain my friend by showing her around Daiï. But no one understands that the marital love is no substitute for a Christian compassion. Then it becomes impossible to make yourself clear without saying bad things about your friend.

And in doing this I degrade and demoralise myself.

No one should ever be driven this far. Let your 'No' be no, and your 'Yes', yes.

Saturday 1^{st} November 1997 is the Fall Conference of the Daiï students in

Japan.

I have accumulated mileage enough on the Daiï Airway card, so from 5th to 19th November 1997 I go to Hawaii.

From Honolulu in Oahu I go to Hawaii, Maui, and then back to Oahu again. At the library in the University of Hawaii I find and read for the first time works by Don Marquis in the series written by Archy the cockroach.

Having slept on the map desk in front of the information centre last night, I explore the craters, this is 11 November 1997.

The Kilauea Iki Crater has a long, grey line cut across its diameter. This is no natural line but the Kilauea Iki Trail. I walk to the Thurstor lava tube first. Around here is lush rainforest. Then I walk across the floor of the Kilauea Iki Crater, where there are cracks and sulphurous gases steam up everywhere.

The floors are giant crusts, lifted up by the pressure of the steam underneath them. They are all rocks and porous, some with large pores while the others with smaller ones.

There are plants growing even though the floors are entirely made of rocks. Some parts of the shrubs fade away, probably due to a new vent of the sulphurous gases.

I have on my socks, and under these sandals. Some people look at my feet and laugh. You are supposed to wear heavy boots or strong foot gear here, but I have none with me.

The path takes me to the Byron hedge trail. Around here rocks fold up in creases like laval flows frozen in the course of their action. Some of the lava bubbles crumble down, showing their ferric red interior inside which I can stand upright and still have some headroom to spare.

The Halema's main crater is huge. One may walk to its very edge where the crust underneath is cracked around on all sides, leaving it to rest on the ground and stay there only by its own weight. The crater resembles an open-pit mine. Its walls all around have two distinct layers, which makes it look like the road for trucks to move down to the mine below.

In November *Mọ* moves into a new condominium while Ellen has failed her driving test again.

By January 1998 the Daiï economy has been suffering from the financial crisis of the preceding year when the Daiï *ḅạd* was attacked by a hedge-fund in the US, and consequently devalued. Now all the Non-Performing Loans, both real and imaginary, crops up like mushrooms.

In Ohio this winter has been mild compared to a few years ago.

On 24^{th} December 1997 we have a Christmas Party together at home, that

is Haramachi 2, Meguro. Megumi has made the cake herself, and has also brought a bottle of wine and the Christmas tree. Later on tonight we go to look at the illumination at Harajuku and Shibuya. It is a cold night. The illumination has been set up by Caster on the Omotesan *dou* (street)

There is a New Year party at the *Bận Daiï* Restaurant at the Futakotamagawa Fun Park on 31^{st} December 1997 . I perform the *blaung fai* (fire sticks).

I have had some fever for a few days, and is now sweating.

But after the performance I feel better. It is strange but true, the act of *goang blaung* always take your fevers away. I have noticed this since no less than ten years ago.

Half way through the performance, *Hia*, as I call the owner of the restaurant and my former boss, asks me to go perform the rest of the thing outside. I duly comply to his request.

It is what I wanted anyway, but I could not possibly have moved all the people outside where it is shivering cold.

This is no modern building but a traditional Daiï one, with the low-ceilinged ground floor where it is only meant to be used as a storage space or the ground to raise the chicken or, for that matter, pigs. I hardly have the extra overhead space needed for some of the moves, for instance the *Nạrạïṇ sĭ kaur* (four-handed *Nārāyaṇa*) which is my favourite.

The doors are opened and people gather behind it to look at me who stand outside performing. I had finished the one-handed parts and now so now it is the two-handed ones I am doing. Some come outside despite the cold. The torch-*blaung*s in my hands seem to enjoy the air in the open, for they burn evermore brightly no matter how hard I try to spin them off.

I am by no means the fastest amongst the spinners of *blaung*. Moreover I know that it is not the speed but the acceleration in the spinning that turns the lit torch part of the thing off as surely as if it were electrically powered and you switched it off. However, I have neither acceleration nor speed, and perhaps because of the abundance of the oxygen in the air the fire on the *blaung*s in my hands not only never waver but splutter happily ever brighter.

In the end my pride lets up, and for fear that I might let them accidentally go I stop and without shame place them on the floor and try to roll them off. Not even this, but a bucket of water someone has thoughtfully fetched it is that does the job a *blaung* master could not do.

It is again the time for the Seishun-18 tickets. My life is nothing but swimming, the Seishun-18 tickets, and the piano.

In a way I am already lucky that there should be three of them instead of two, because they can now form circular combinations instead of the otherwise

mundane toggling back and forth.

This time Megumi takes me to Shikoku, that fourth one and the least known of the four big islands of Japan.

On 4th January we go to Nikko during the day where we walk along the Chūzenji *ko* (lake) . At the corner of the lake closest to us a creek becomes the Kegon Fall before it goes into the lake. The Nantai *san* (mountain) is so close by that there are no flat grounds between the foot of its cone and the road along the lake. It seems that from behind the shops that line this street we climb straight up the mountain.

No mountains could be as boring to climb as this, with its monotonous conic shape and its lacks of trees, except perhaps the Mt Fuji. At night we take the *Moonlight*, that JR train which never stops.

In the morning of 5th January we have a quick look at the Himeji *jou* (castle), and then we need to go back to the Okayama Station.

We reach Shikoku in no time, and cross over on the Seto *ōhashi* (big bridge).

Opened in April 1988, the bridge is approximately 12 km long. To reach this bridge on the train you go first to Okayama. But the bridge is so enticing that we get off at the last JR station, in Kojima, and then take a bus across instead.

We get off the bus midway on the bridge where there is the Fisher Park. We wait for the transfer bus, but in the end when it doth come we need to buy another ticket anyway, for we have stopped here too long.

The park, however, gives good views. There are a pier and an entertainment ship.

Tonight we stay at the YHA in Takamatsu.

On the 6th we look at the Whirlpool in the sea inside the channel. From Takamatsu we take the Koutoku line to Tokushima, and have to wait for a train at Sampon Matsu.

The Yoshino River enters the sea between Naruto and Tokushima. The Naruto *uzushio* (eddy current) takes place periodically according to the *shio* (tides). The narrow Naruto Strait lets the water flow freely during the high tide, but with the flow ebbing during the low tide eddies are formed.

The Youth Hostel at Awa Ikeda where we stay tonight is most commendable. We have made a reservation and since we know that we are going to arrive late at night, the owner of the place kindly picks us up at the Awa Ikeda Station. From the station it is 5.5 kilometres to the youth hostel.

We cross over the Yoshino River and then climb uphill along a winding, rather steep road. This is in the mid of winter when there are few people travelling, so we are given the best and most spacious room.

The place is on the mountain bordering a *kenritsu shizen kouen* (prefectural nature-park) where the sounds of the *hototogisu* (little cuckoo, *Cuculus poliocephalus*) and the *uguisu* (Japanese bush warbler, *fam.* Sylviidae) are common.

The following day, since we are leaving very early in the morning, we are given a lift again to the station.

Today, 7^{th} January, we visit the Koraku *en* (garden). We go as far as to Kanazawa and stay at the youth hostel there.

On the 8^{th} we take a night train back to Tokyo.

In the morning of the 9^{th} the train stop with no proper reasons at Kitamoto in Saitama, and we are delayed for two hours. We arrive at Ikebukuro instead of Shinjuku. The delay is caused by the snow that has just fallen on the city. Cities in Hokkaido, for instance Sapporo, have all their train tracks equipped with heating facility to melt away the snow. And they have the snow half of the time but the trains never stop. On the other hand, here in Tokyo where it seldom snows, the trains grind to a stop each time there is as much a thimbleful of snow as this.

On 17 and 18 January Megumi and I go to Yamanashi and stay at her place there. It is such a great place in which her grandfather used to live. He is no more now. Along our way there we stop to visit his grave, and here we pray.

The cemetery is a good walk up the hill. Everywhere is covered with snow, especially on the hill where we have to wade through thick snow. Here I find out to my dismay that when you have given up smoking you never could find a lighter to light the candles.

By 7^{th} February 1998 I am recovering from a cold and plan to move into the new place at 1-22-35 Himonya in the Meguro Ward next month. It is nice and well-lit with windows facing both east and south, which would have been ideal for me. The place is very quiet. It is surrounded by a Catholic church and a Japanese temple, and from the window of my room one can see a Japanese graveyard. It is about 15 minutes on foot from where I live now. It turns out that I shall never move into this place. It would have been difficult for Megumi to come to see me here, as it seems that we need to inform the landlord every time she does.

Prince says on 19^{th} February 1998 that there have been some forecasts of the snow in England, but without any luck so far.

'This middle of March, we plan to go to the beach nearby', says one of my sisters on the 23^{th}. She reminds me of *Middlemarch* (1871–72) by George Eliot (née Mary Ann Evans, 1819–1880). I promise myself I shall really read it through to the end this time.

My friend in the US went skiing on Saturday 21^{st} It was quite warm and so parts of the mountain became icy. She fell down must have been twenty

times. 'This mountain in lake placid used to be an Olympic site in 1980', was her concluding remark.

I wonder what, if any, *scare* and *sacred* have in common. But the latter was the past participle of *sacre* whereas the former is similar to the Icelandic *skjarr* (apt to flee) and *skirra* (drive away), so both seem to be different from each other enough.

The TIT branch of the IEEE organises a trip to All Nippon Airways on 26 February 1998. We meet at the Haneda Station near the exit from the Tokyo Monorail.

The inside of the garage where the Boeing's are maintained looks like nothing earthly. You feel as though you are inside a future colonial spaceship in some scientific fictions.

We look at the flight simulators which are used for training the pilots how to fly the plane, take off and touch down. It is a small room with screens simulating the view that you would see from the windscreens of the real aircrafts. To us it is like an expensive computer game. But to the pilot trainee it must be more than that, perhaps more of a limbo than mere entertainment, for they know that after this they will be flying the real thing which will look and feel exactly the same to all intents and purposes.

On 27 February I go to the Nippori Station and then to a concert hall to watch Megumi play the piano. The following day I move into the new place. And then on Sunday 1st March there is a concert at Komaba.

In March 1998 I move into a new place and my address is now 1–10 - 2 Minami, Meguro Ku, *Toukyou* 152–0013.

I discover my new identity. I know now that am a Daiï whose ethnic origin can be simply described as Chino-Siamese-Lanna. I was born in November 1966 in Jiangmhăi, Daiï. Before this I always thought that *Lā̤nna̤* which is my mother tongue was nothing but a corrupted Daiï. We use different words, and even those words that sounds similar are never exactly pronounced the same. It was impossible to write *Lā̤nna̤* with the Daiï alphabet. But now I know that this is only because the Daiï government in the past suppressed the teaching of the *Lā̤nna̤* alphabet for fearing that the people of that culture would want to form another country instead of being with Sïam, which of course is nonsense.

The Lā̤nna̤, in other words the Lannaese, are no arrogant people who had never been ruled over by another culture. The land had been under the Burmese for more than 200 years, so we know humiliation well.

Myself I never believe in countries. It is very difficult to define yourself in terms of only one country.

For example, I am a Daiï since I was born in Daiï. But my great-grandmother was from *Ayudhya̤*, so I could call myself a Siamese. She was still alive when

I was born. But my first language is *Lā̱nna̱* which belongs to a culture that is older than Sukhọdaï let alone *Ayudhya̱*, Sïam or for that matter Daïï. Shall I be a Lā̱nna̱ then?

Then my grand father emigrated from China, and he did give me a Chinese name of Zhāng Míng Lóng, so you could possibly call me a Chinese.

As though this is no complications enough I do have a dad and a mum who are both New Zealanders, and I still identify myself as a Kiwi since I studied and graduated from a high school there which implies that I was *made* in New Zealand. Teachers are very essential to the Daïï culture. So I could say that I am a Kiwi because I was made in New Zealand, and likewise a British because I have studied there too.

Through *kyūdou* I have learnt the Japanese culture at its roots and thus I was made in Japan and therefore a Japanese too. One of my Kyudo *sensei*'s (teachers) gave me the name 'Kippu', meaning *spirit* where *ki* is the *ki* for the air and *pu* is the *fu* for the wind. This word is only used for someone who was born in Tokyo, especially in the saying, 'Edokko, kippu ga ī!', that is *Edokkites are good in the spirit*, Edokko or Edokkites being the people who are born in Edo, that is Tokyo. So my teacher in the Japanese archery has accepted me as a Japanese by calling me Kippu instead of Kit, and what other people may say become irrelevant as a consequence.

All countries are made by God provided that there is a god. Both Christianity and Islam say that if there is a god then there is only one. In other words, there can be one and only one god so we may talk about the God in a capital letter.

This is by no means equivalent to saying that there must necessarily be a god, because it only implies to all intents and purposes that if there is to be a god there can be only one.

There are only two possibility for the Cosmos, namely stationary or non-stationary. The last one has a singularity, the Big Bang, as the point of creation and therefore it is obvious in this case that there is a God. But even the other remaining possibility, the stationary Universe, could still have a god, even though it is more difficult to imagine in this case. Because saying that the universe may be non-stationary is not equivalent to saying that no gods exist, a religious cosmologist should never despise those advocates of a stationary universe.

During the summer holiday of my fourth year at the Cuĺa̱longkaurn̤ University I went to work in Hungary. That was in 1990. Hungary had just turned into a democratic country one year.

I went there with an international student organisation called AIESEC, which stands for Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales. I applied to them at Rạmgaṃhạeng University in 1987 because I wanted to do my Engineering Training abroad. The training

was required by my department at the university.

But I went to work in Surrey during the summer vacation of 1989 for that training instead. I did not feel like going to Budapest then since Hungary was still a communist country. Back then the iron curtain was still there and no one knows what was going on on the other side.

I try to teach myself Hungarian geography because I have no memorabilia left from the time when I lived there. I was robbed of all my belongings in Warsaw before I returned home after having lived in Budapest a few months.

Budapest is a combination of three different towns, Buda, Pest and Old Buda. Buda and Pest are divided by the river Danube. The first one is hilly with lots of woods, while the latter residential area and boring. Old Buda was an old Roman city.

I remember going to the Hungarian National Museum where the crown of St István was kept. The crown was decorated with a cross on top. But the cross tilted to one side.

When AIESEC had an orienteering we went to the Margitsziget which was an island in the Danube. There was a pedestrian bridge breaking off from a bridge for traffic which went over the river.

The island was $2,000 \times 500$ metres in size. It had among other things a swimming pool. From what I remember the pool was odd-looking shape and very long. From one end of the pool we could walk across a lawn to another pool which was smaller but deeper. There was a spring board on this smaller one.

We went to the Castle District on the Buda side of the Danube which had been listed in a heritage list of UNESCO since 1988. In 1686 there was a fire which had destroyed a great part of the castle. There was a church called Mátyás church which had its roofs in majolica style. There was also the Royal Palace which was destroyed by fire in 1945, and which housed the Hungarian National Gallery and the Museum of Contemporary History.

I went with my flat mates to take a bath at the Király Baths. It had a very beautiful interior with pillars and marbles. The sulfurous bath inside was very warm and murky. I thought that it was hot and had to get off often for fear that I would faint in it.

I remember going to operas at the opera house many times. There were Tanhäuser, La Traviata, etc. The tickets were very cheap, and you could just walk in if you went there sometime after the performance had already started and choose any box you'd like to sit in.

We went to a cathedral to hear the Dalai Lama talked. His English was very good. I did not know then that he was an American. I thought that it was only because he had lived in America for sometimes which made his English so good. So I somewhat admired him. When the talk was over we stood at

the front door waiting for him to come out. We nearly rubbed shoulders with him just before he went into a big black car.

We went together in three to the cathedral, me, Rob and his friend. Rob showed me a puzzle his friend made from something he saw while in Japan. It was a paper forming a tiled band. I was asked if I could turn its inside out. His friend gave me the puzzle he made.

I solved it about three days afterwards and virtually showed it to everyone I knew. To be precise, I gave away many copies of it which I had made myself, even before I could solve it. It was such a nice puzzle and I wanted to share it with all. I think that the way I solved it was the simplest and thus the best.

A year afterwards one friend of mine at the Mining Engineering Department to whom I was a senior did solve it in another way. His was more complicated than mine, but still it was a nice way. The key idea which made these two solutions beautiful was that of the symmetry point reached when midway from one side to the other.

Szentendre is a small town 20 kilometres to the north of Budapest. It is mainly a tourist town. I had been there more than ten times already.

Hévíz is a small town southwest of the Balaton Lake and less than 10 kilometres away from it. There was a thermal lake there, 4.4 hectares in size. A large structure was built over it, standing just above the water. Inside there are lounges and changing rooms.

I went there with a group of students from AIESEC in a bus. It was one of those study tours. I remember it was nice and windy when we arrived, but later on when we were swimming in the pool it became sunny and warm.

We made a round trip when my flat mate from Germany and I went around the country together in his car. The trip was very nice. We had some memorable experiences.

Once I remember we drove into a town just before midnight. We stopped by the road side and was taking out and preparing some food when we heard some noises of some drunken people in a distance.

Not long afterwards one guy walking towards our car, stopped and begged at my half-opened door for money. I said we did not have any, which was true since we were on budget. Or should I say that I was on budget and my friend did the same because I was reluctant to have him pay more than I did.

The drunken man did not go away and started to talk louder. I think he held the door of the car so I was not able to close it and drive away. That was why I got off the car, saying nothing but with a long bread knife in one hand ready for trouble. The guy left immediately. He was not drunk after all.

After that there were still loud noises here and there on the street. We

thought that it was probably the time pubs and restaurants closed. We agreed not to stay a minute longer, but to pack our food and go.

We drove out of the town not knowing where we should go. Our previous plan was to stop our car close to a police station or a park in town where there was some street light, and sleep the night inside the car. But now we thought we knew better. The city and people were not better than, or as good as nature.

From a deserted and unlit road we turned off onto a small lane, went along some fifty meters and stopped our car.

After there was neither the sound of the engine nor the headlights of cars, we started to hear the nature around us. I think we ate and talked. And then I washed my teeth and said good night. Behind us and not very far away there were poplars standing in a row. I can still hear the sound of them rustling in the wind. It was very nice.

All above us were millions of stars. I could see them just looking out of the window to my left or through the windscreen in front of me. I kept my glasses on for a while, wanting to look at the stars a little bit more. But even when I did take them off, just the sound of poplar leaves rustling in the wind in a spring night was already something.

When we woke up in the morning we found that the road we were on actually led to a lake close by. Not far away there were already one or two people at the lake, one was in it swimming. We breakfasted, swam in the lake when the sun had risen a bit higher and then off we went on our way.

We drove across the plain. We went either to Debrecen or to Miskolc, or both. On the way from there back to Budapest we passed through a great plain. Sometimes the road did rise up, came down or made a large curve a little bit, but more often at a long stretch there was just flatness everywhere. The grass made waves with the wind. It was a hot day. The trip across the plain was also very memorable, as well as a change.

Before I live in Tokyo I used to live in Manchester. It was a town when I saw it for the first time in 1994. I was there doing my Master's degree until 1995. When I returned there to do a PhD it had become a city.

Manchester's contemporary history can be divided into two periods, one before *the bomb* and the other after. The bomb was that by the Irish Republican Army in June 1996 which did not kill anyone. The media proudly claimed that the reason for this was that the police miraculously managed to evacuate the 80,000 people from the Arndale Shopping Centre area in time.

I agreed this could be true, but could not help suspecting that it was the intention of the IRA as well. I never side with them, no reason why I should, but I think in this case at least this seems to be the case. This could be because there was a strong Irish community in this city. Every year in March

we have an Irish Festival to celebrate St Patrick's Day.

Until that bomb Manchester was in a similar situation to Ireland in the 19th century. It was being neglected by the government. The city which had become so great and powerful between 1870 and 1930 had shrunken. Spots where it had retreated from had become back streets both dark and evil, ruled solely by crimes. Even Rusholme, Stockport and Sale had become isolated from the city centre, let alone places as far away from it as Altrincham and Bolton.

In those days Manchester and the Greater Manchester had become as far apart as possible in many senses. The former one represented mediocrity and the latter one outlandishness. I remembered every one of my student friends said that it was a miserable and dangerous city. Everyone thought that he had made a wrong choice.

In those days no streets here was safe. Oxford Road was deserted and mucking was not uncommon. If you went along it outward towards Wilmslow Road it became unthinkable to be walking on one's own. The Roman remains in Castle Field was nowhere to be seen. None of us has been to it nor even heard anything about it. One was never safe, not even in places where it was bustling with people. There was only one such place and it was the ugly Arndale Centre where the bomb went off.

Once while walking the Market Street I heard a woman yelled and there was a lean tall man with a woman's handbag in one hand running. The funny thing was he kept running round and round, criss-crossing the crowded path but never ran away. No wonder he finally went down by one gentleman who casually sticked out one foot of his. The previous man was then taken away either by two policemen or by two security guards I could not remember.

He was near crying, seemingly rather from being upset than from having hurt himself in his fall. Two things came across my mind then. The first one was that it did not become a man to cry, especially one his height and who professed to be a thief. The second one was that crime was so common no one seemed to take any notice of the second man and none seemed thankful to what he had done.

Ireland used to have a similar experience. During the Great Famine in 1845–47 a million people died. Many fled to America, bringing with them the resonant sound in their Irish accent to become one of the distinguished characteristics of American accent.

Though it was true that *Phythophthora infestans* was the cause of disastrous potato output level, many people still felt that the British government could have done more to help the starving people. Many felt infuriated as a result. The memory etched deep in the minds of the Irish and was the cause of the formation of the IRA.

The reason for the downturn of Manchester to a verge of ruin can be put

to a change in technology as well as a change in the government.

During the industrial revolution the city was in a strategic position. It was close enough to a port. A ship canal has been built to bring ships up to its doorsteps. It was situated in the middle of the country, and thus suitable as a railway junction. Both resources and goods went by train. Coal, which was the main source of energy then, was also shipped by trains and Manchester was not far from its source.

Technology has changed and coal has been mostly replaced at the same time as being gradually phased out due to environmental issues. This could explain why a city had reduced into a town and was falling into ruin.

As usually was the case, government also had a part to play. The city had a history strongly linked to labour movement. So it is not unreasonable to expected it to prosper when Labour is in power, and falling out of favour or even sneered at when Conservative is.

I used to think I preferred Conservative. But having seen how UK's economics has improved after Labour took charge and how the country has stopped sneering at or ignoring its neighbour European countries, I changed my mind.

Under Conservative, the Home Office used to be more hostile to foreigners also. When I worked in a Daiï restaurant south of Chinatown in 1995, they used to storm us once and sent an old woman who was kind to me away. In other words, with Conservative in power they treated us like pigs.

The anti-racism then was a shallow show or was a governing game, and the government was doing nothing but a games-show. I have heard they even sent a president of the Student Union of one university away for good because they thought he was not supposed to work or to hold a position. It did not make any sense to them that he was a volunteer and did not get any money out of it.

In other words they were Hell Office proper because no one who boils a gentle guest in his own house will be able to call it a home, let alone be able to feel cool inside himself.

Some ignoramus within Conservative still told the media recently that they would give Labour back their own country when they come into power. I think it is more likely they would put Britain into a second Dark Age. They do not know how to love their neighbours and everything they stand for in democracy is hollower than one would imagine possible.

In February 2001 I was in London with other student volunteers to meet the Deputy Home Office Secretary Mr Boateng. He seemed nice. More than that, considering the image of the Home Office that his opposition party endeavours he seemed humane. The only thing his predecessor ever did was wreaking havoc and bullying.

Claire said in 1995 that she was not happy with what Conservative was doing with the country, so she looked forward to a Labour government. I did not agree with her though I did not say anything. I could never agree with her more now.

Sometimes I felt sorry for the former government and thought that perhaps they were a misunderstood monster like the Rolling Stone in the past who had got to maintain a public image of bad guys. But then I thought, 'But this is absurd'. I think that in the end handsome is what handsome does or beauty is what beauty does, what ever.

Where is the moon tonight?

The rain has just stopped
there is no moon tonight
the air is so still
all is quiet

Lovers passed me by
they are whispering to
each other's ears.

Who are they ?
From where did they come?
...whither did thou go?

The rain has just stopped,
it reminds me of you.

Why is there no moon tonight?

Racism in the UK seems to be a very serious issue indeed. Not that I think it is. In fact, I think that it is not that big an issue here when compared with elsewhere. However it is considered close to being a crime to be considered a racist.

I have a feeling that often it is not your race that people mind but the way you talk. Is it not true that a black American talks differently from a white one. Mr Aziz of the Gild company said that every one was a racist. I disagreed with him, saying that I was not.

For me to dislike someone is normal, even good. But to have a prejudice, to group people together and then generalise your prejudice on each group, that's racism. I think that independence, solitude and intercultural communication helps eradicate this kind of thing.

Having done the sixth form English in New Zealand and never had any problem living in English speaking environment, I must admit that I had little experience of racism. Similar to the first time that I came to the UK,

when nobody that I knew followed football, which kept me wondering who did watch it and how come it did get popular in the UK, most people that I knew seemed not to be a racist, that I could not help wondering sometimes who was. But then again there were these cases. You knew what it was when you came across one.

The company called Gild that I mentioned earlier did catering. They recruited people and students to work in a bar selling food and drink at football clubs, or at hotels when there was a party. I went there because Kai told me that they wanted people to work on New Year's Eve for double pay.

I wanted to cook so I applied for a job as a chef, but was told that there was nothing for me. When I said that I was not interested in a waiting job, they said that was fine and that they wanted me to come to a training. 'But', one of them said without any relevance to what we had been talking about at all, 'You've got to be honest with us and tell us exactly what day you can work'. I thought to myself afterwards, 'Did he think I was a fool who could not understand English well enough to know that I was being taken for a fool?' He would have seemed to be an imbecile himself if he said the same thing to a British. Well...Was racism excluded?

I thought they were talking about cooking training so I said I would be glad to come. After a while I decided to ask them again what the training was for, and was told that it was for being a waiter. Then I said that I did not want to be a waiter, I had waited all my life. So I took my application form and went away without a word.

Another incident, also with Gild, was when we were assigned the Liverpool Football Club at Anfield on the New Year Day. We went to Liverpool from Manchester with a minibus. Everyone was supposed to have a job to do. But in the end only half of us did, and that half comprised of all the British and all the blacks. The other half of course was all Asians. The young lady from Gild who took us there was called Jessica. She was black. Was racism excluded?

From what she said our English was not good. Unfortunately that implied mine as well, and since as I have already told you I had my 6^{th}-Form English from New Zealand which I endeared so much, I would very much doubt her conjecture. I would really like to compete with her in the matter of English.

I was tragic, if you know what I mean. And by that I mean I was serious. I have not studied *Macbeth* for nothing. It might be that she hated us because she had overheard one Chinese whose name was Mike said that there were a lot of Negroes. I knew Mike. He was one of my fourteen flat mates. What I did not know was whether he knew that *Negro* is a derogatory word.

If this was the case, then whether he did know or not it could not be a reason enough for my having to be out of job for what he said. I was always polite. I did not say a word untrue to English propriety. Then provided that

racism was excluded, I should have been able to work on that day both at Anfield and at the Manchester United Football Club later on that night. I should have been able to earn no less than eighty pounds.

I always went to the Manchester Public Library. I borrowed many books, mostly on languages, and piano music. I made sure not to overdue a book because I did not want to have to pay the charge. Once I had all the books I borrowed renewed at the counter. That made me much at ease for I knew I would not be surprisedly fined.

During the Christmas and New Year holidays I asked again when the next due date for the books I had borrowed would be, and was told that the next one was due 28th January. On 3rd January I decided to start returning books, so I took seven books to the library. I was told that I was going to be fined forty pence because two of the books were overdue.

Susan, a lady at the counter, said that I should have obtained a printout of the new due date when I had the books renewed. She thought that I was lying. If there were printouts then why was I not given one? Why was I misled in the matter of dates when I asked about the next time I need to return a book? Again one could ask oneself, 'Is racism excluded?'

Independence and solitude are two important ingredients for not being a racist. They are not easy things to do. You need to have courage, knowledge and readiness to protect yourself.

To put it plainly, it is by far an easier thing to do to stay within a group. You readily have a licence for everything. When your group became a mob, it turned a hideous creature. It did everything, you had done nothing. So it is safer to stay within a group, even though you betray your soul in the process.

In my childhood years I was a Buddhist. Between the age of 17 and 20 I called myself non-religion, only because I thought that it was not possible to believe in more than one religion. Now I call myself a Christian at times because I do believe in God. But then again, I also believe in Buddhism as a wisdom or a philosophy.

For me Buddhism is not a religion but a philosophy. It did not start from myths, as would have to be the case if it were to be called a religion. Any myth that has been put in after philosophy is therefore out of place and irrelevant, only to serve the purposes of some irrelevant individuals. So I believe in at least one religion and one philosophy, respectively Christianity and Buddhism.

My nationality is Daiï but I do not even feel that I am a Daiï. Not only because I was born there that I should feel I belong there.

Now I say that my mother tongue is Lāṇṇa. I used to say it was Daiï. After having become interested in languages I now know that the two are different, though closely related, languages. Daiï military governments tried

to have only one language for the country. They discouraged the use of Lā̱nnạ script. It was not to be taught in schools, not even to be mentioned in text books. To help reviving the Lā̱nnạ language proper, script and all, is one of my ambitions.

But I do not feel myself a Lā̱nnạ. Though I had a grandmother who came from Ayudhya and through my Sri Ayudhya Sword School I am deeply related to the Daiï culture as passed down from the time when the nostalgic city of Ayudhya ruled the area, I do not feel myself a Daiï. Though both of my grandfathers came from China and I like the Chinese language, I do not feel myself a Chinese. I could have felt myself a New Zealander, a Japanese or a British. Having the nationality is not a prerequisite for feeling the sense of belonging. Or would I rather say that I feel I belong everywhere above?

Manchester has changed from being a sorry shrunken skeleton of a city I used to know in 1995 into the pride of a region. This, I think, was the result of a bomb by IRA at the Arndale Centre in 1996.

The plan of the city seemed to be the opposite of that of London. Instead of East End we have Moss Side to the west. The China and Ethnic town is to the south, not to the north. Both river Medlock and river Mersey flew westward instead of eastward as was the case with the Thames.

I used to like Conservative, but now I preferred Labour. Manchester, as well as British economics as a whole, owed much to the Labour government. The country now became more international instead of isolated.

Like fat cells which never go away, Manchester has grown again to fill its former self with amazing speed. I once bought a Megarider ticket and went around the city on Stagecoaches Manchester for a week. The expanse of Greater Manchester and the distribution of houses was stunning.

The first time I went to London was in the Spring of 1989 when I did Engineer Training at the John Dallimore and Partners in Walton-on-Thames and lived in Weybridge. I flew with Air Lanka to Heathrow with a transit in Colombo.

Bill, who was going to be my boss, was there at the airport with his Ford Scorpio. When I stepped from the custom section into arrival area he was there right in front of me with the warmest welcome. We went on M25 heading for St Albans where his home was. There I met Met who was a sister of Ben who introduced me to his brother-in-law Bill.

Bill was a fast driver. Sometimes when I stayed over in St Albans and came with him to the office in the morning he would drive well over hundred miles per hour. He said once he was travelling at 160 mph turning a bend and saw the behind of a car in front of his caught in a traffic jam and nearly could not make it braking.

In 43 AD the Romans crossed the Thames close to the site of London

Bridge. Thirteen years later it was badly damaged by the fighting between the force of Queen Boadicea and the Romans.

In 836 it was invaded by Vikings. In 1052 Westminster Abbey was built in Thorney Island on the site previously a Benedictine Abbey. In 1066 the city was besieged during the Norman Conquest and William I became king. The population of the city was approximately 15,000.

William II was crowned in 1087, Henry I in early 12^{th} century, Henry II 1154, King John 1199, Henry III 1216, Edward I 1272, Edward II 1307, Edward III 1327, Richard II 1377, Henry IV 1399, Henry V 1413, Henry VI 1422, Edward V 1483 and then replaced by Richard III the same year, Henry VII 1485 and Tudor period began, Henry VIII 1509, Queen Elizabeth I 1558, Charles I 1625, James II 1685, George I 1714 beginning the House of Hanover, George II 1727, George III 1760, George IV 1820, William IV 1830, Queen Victoria 1837, Edward VII 1910 beginning the House of Saxe-Coburg, George V 1910 beginning the House of Windsor, Edward VIII 1936 and replaced by George VI the same year.

In 1348 the Black Death reduced the population of the city by half to 30,000. In 1665 the Great Plague killed 100,000 people. The Great Fire destroyed the medieval city in 1666.

In 1675 Christopher Wren began the construction of St Paul's Cathedral and the Royal Greenwich Observatory was built to mark meridian. In 1711 the Academy of Art opened. In 1759 the British Museum was opened. The first canal from River Lea to Thames was completed in 1770.

In 1785 *The Times* newspaper began. In 1803 Surrey Canal was completed from Peckham to docks. Construction of the National Gallery was begun in 1832. In 1851 the Great Exhibition was held in the Crystal Palace within Hyde Park. Construction of the Tate Gallery began in 1893. In 1933 the London Transport began to operate.

In 1939 the population of the city reached its peak of 8,615,050. Queen Elizabeth II was crowned in 1952. In 1976 the Museum of London was opened. London Dockland Development Corporation started working in 1981. The Gatwick North Terminal was opened in 1988.

Bill took me to visit many interesting places. We went to a pumping station for preventing flood from the Thames, to the Dartford Tunnel where we went inside a huge ventilation duct where very strong wind blew and to the Gatwick Airport to have a look at the electrical installation.

In early 1995 during my study at UMIST just when my money ran out I found myself a job just because I had learnt the art of old Daiï weaponry from the Sri Ayudhya Sword School. I performed more than ten times around Manchester for a Moaï Daiï organisation. I performed before matches as well as in a Daiï restaurant owned by the owner of the organisation.

On 17^{th} February 2001 I went to visit Bill and Met in St Albans and stayed the night at their place. The next day I was in London visiting the British Museum and stayed at the Tower Inn in Westminster, a five minutes' walk to the Houses of Parliament where I was to join other representatives of Community Action from all over the country.

On Monday 19^{th} we met next to a statue beside the Westminster Abbey, which was on the opposite side of Abingdon Street to the Houses of Parliament. There we had photographs taken together and then with Mr Boateng the Home Office Minister when he arrived. Mr Boateng was the Deputy Home Secretary. Shortly after he arrived he asked where the cheque was and I said, 'It's gone' and then quickly added 'somewhere'. He shook hands with us all around our photographer could hardly have time to point camera at the right place. I was too busy trying to place myself in a right place for him that I missed shaking hands with our minister.

The *mock* cheque of 8.4 million pounds was a huge one. Together with a banner it was meant for photographs which in turn was for publicity. We then went in through St Stephen Entrance to a meeting inside one of the Committee Rooms.

That afternoon I bought a day ticket of Zone 1 and 2 and went around London. I went to the Camden Lock Market in the Camden Town where there were many small stalls selling various things from lamps to devil's stick to clothes to Yaki Soba.

I walked to the Docklands (Isle of Dogs) from Greenwich via a foot tunnel under the river Thames, and after that went to and walked around Canary Wharf. The train that runs there was called the Docklands Light Railway. This was similar to the Yurikamome line in Tokyo which traverses the Tokyo Kaikan, the development on old garbage landfill sites in Tokyo Bay. The atmosphere was also a similar one with exclusively brand new things.

Westminster is at the heart of politics in Britain. Number 10 Downing Street is here as well as the Houses of Parliament and the Westminster Abbey where kings and queens are crowned.

The development of Canary Wharf was done by Canadian developers Olympia and York. Phase one was completed in 1991 and phase two began in 1996.

You know how to do a thing if you know how to do it with relaxation. Now I know how to play the piano in a relaxed manner. And I can swim on for miles on end without stopping. For me swimming is a series of the different poses of reclining.

For I shall do things for *pleasure* not from *pressure*. Yo thinks on Tuesday 3^{rd} March that to be able to play the piano in a relaxed manner also means to be able to play it fluently. This is not so because while you read you may relax, but you can never be perfect.

On 8^{th} March 1998 I join the Cultural Assets Tour which is organised by the Meguro Ward. We walk around in a guided tour with an elderly and knowledgeable volunteer. It is quite cold but the sun is shining.

The path leads us up and down the hills before coming to an end at the Shibafu *hiroba* (open ground) on top of the hill in the Shibuya Ward, where I stay around longer to sit in the sun and look at Mt Fuji. Up here it is quite windy and cold. But there are many people around since it is Sunday. In the afternoon I go to a concert, again at the Komaba Park.

Nhăung says she has a summer course from 25 March until 15 May. My parents meet Nhan in Ḅaṇgkauk before they go together to Hạ́dẏhăị̣.

On 11th March Paum says that she had lived in a dorm during her first two years in Syracuse. She had to move twice in the summer, that is first out and then in again. Then she moved to stay in an *apartment* for a year. She used to have many friends when she was still attending classes, but now most of them have already left.

To create something you always have to do it alone. And PhD is usually the beginning of your creative career. She will be working with some pathologists.

Once a good swimmer, she could now barely cover 700 metres in 40 minutes, stopping every 50 metres. This week is the spring break and she had been up to the lake with three friends and stayed there for one night.

But the weather was really cold, so there was nothing much they could do there. They spent the whole day and night in front of the fireplace, played card, watched the TV and chatted.

The view from the living-room of this bed and breakfast is spectacular. She had to give up her plan of going snow-shoeing that morning since it was 15 Fahrenheit. In May she is going to drive her family up to Adirondack and possibly they will stay there four days.

Daiï seems to be in a really deep water. Until early last year it used to be around 25 *ḅạd*s to a US dollar, but now (20 Mar.) it is about 40 *ḅạd*s to a dollar and *Nhăung* says that it is already a good sign and an improvement. This is waking up one day to find your buying power reduced by about one half. Six days later in all the due excitement it is now 38 *ḅạd*s to a dollar.

I am glad all Daiïs are closer to God than the USers (or USites, US's, USese whatever) because we are the poorer between the two. Jesus says that it is very difficult for the rich to reach the kingdom of God.

But to give the devil his due, it is good that they should choose to tell the Daiïs this way to severe the dependence upon them. Everybody grows up. Daiïs will never go anywhere if they still think the USese as being a god as they did in the past.

The Daiï Embassy in Tokyo sends out emails to all the students to say that

there is going to be a Daiï trade fair during April and May, and the organisers are looking for an interpreter in case anybody is interested. I telephone one evening without much hope, for my Japanese is so poor you would never believe. I have to wait for a while before Murayama comes on the phone.

He tells me that the company Nikkei Shouji is looking for an interpreter to work for three weeks at three different places. Since I am interested he asks me what my fees are, but I say I do not know.

'I have never worked as an interpreter before,' I tell him, 'What do you suggest?'

'What do people normally ask for?', I ask him.

'About ten thousand yen a day, I think,' he says.

'Then, I will say the same thing,' I tells him without thinking.

On the morning of 8$^{\text{th}}$ April I take the train to the Kumyouji Station where the company is. The first floor is filled with furniture, but on the second floor Murayama is waiting. It turns out that he is the owner of the company after his father who had recently died.

He decides that I could do the job, and half way through it gives me a raise in the salary of fifty per cent. I did not know I was talking to the owner when I asked him what I should ask for as a fee. I thought he was a clerk. What company would put you through to not even the manager but the owner on your first call!

But I soon find out that this is by no means unusual. An interpreter is much closer to the boss than you would think. He reports directly to him, sits with him at the table, and share not only his ideas but also his thoughts. In a negotiation, for example, he needs to know the purpose, if not the strategy, of the meetings.

But I only interpret for the demonstrators and the people who come to look at their products and demonstration. Nikkei Shoji is a big company who organises events like this every year at various places within Japan. The theme varies from one exhibition to another. Now it is the Daiï products and crafts, and the places are all at branches of the Takashima *ya* (department store).

We are at Konandai during 15–21 April, in Yokohama 22–28 April, and at Tamagawa 29 April–5 May 1998. Among those for whom I interpret are Khiang, Ṇrongġśakdxi, Seṛiẏa, Soboṇ, Tīk and Vniḍạ. The Naraya is also here which is to become a successful shop with many outlets in the future. With it are Vạsṇạ, Nan, *É* and others. As a shop they are professional in their organisation.

After the event the owner of the company and Vạsṇạ's husband comes to Japan and takes everyone in the company to the Tokyo Disneyland when I

am also invited to come along.

Soḅhoṇ is from the *Śụnẏa Śilpȧhatthkarrm Bụ̄enḅȧn* (heritage handicraft centre) in Nȧgaur Śrịdharrmrạj, Daiï. She makes the most beautiful items from *yȧn libhao*, bamboo and *ḅaị lạn*. Tīk is from the *Śụnẏa Utsạhkarrm Daṃròm Ḅặusrȧ̀ng* (Bặusrȧ̀ng umbrella-making industrial centre) at Sankaṃbạeng in *Jiangmhặị*.

Japanese bathe together naked. It is so normal here, and no one gives it a second thought. I am a Daiï, but I have lived here for three years and I forget how to think as a Daiï. It is only from the correspondences with my people at home that I now recall that many a Daiï ladies would rather choose an instant death than such shame in the public bath as already described.

So I have reached my own conclusion that no definitions of our adjectives or adverbs could possibly be definitive. After having thought it over for a while, I am now very happy with this conclusion of mine. But see how I avoid calling it a definition.

I am proud of the friend I have who lives in the US. She went to Washington DC on 28$^{\text{th}}$ April. There she gave a presentation and demonstration, both of which lasted two hours, to people among whom are politicians, Congressmen, senators, and people in the military uniform.

I study the Japanese Sign Language every Thursday from 7$^{\text{th}}$ May until 6$^{\text{th}}$ August. These *shuwa tsūyaku* (sign-language interpretation) began on 23$^{\text{rd}}$ April when I was still interpreting Daiï for Murayama. There is no class on 16 July, and on the 30$^{\text{th}}$ of that month my *shukketsu* (attendance) card was stamped *ketsu* (absent) in red ink for no obvious reasons. The classes are cut short by my visit to Daiï.

Japanese Signs is based on the American Sign Language. But it is Japanese all the same, and has several words which are intrinsically local, for example *bewu* which imitates the ritualistic *sumo* (Japanese wrestler) thanking gesture.

These courses greatly increase my perspectives of language. Signs are the only languages on earth that are three-dimensional in their manifest. English, French, German, and all the other languages of Europe that I do not know are all written in one dimension.

Daiï is written in x dimensions, where $1 < x < 2$ because it puts certain vowels, depending on what they are, may go above, below , or in front of the leading consonant. Lā̱nnạ's writing is y-dimensional, where $1 < y < 2$ and $y > x$, since has all the degree-of-freedoms of Daiï just mentioned as well as the migration of consonants to under the leading character when they are final.

I design in 2002 on my own accord, based on Stokoe's systems, the writing of the ASL in one dimension using the roman letters. My interest in Signs which begins with these JSL courses I am taking now is boosted by my reading

in 2002, while I shall be staying at the St Gabriel dormitory in Manchester, books by Oliver Sacks, for example the *Seeing Voices* (1989).

There is a welcome party at TIT at 6 pm on 14th May. On 15 May 1998 I go to the Fuji *san* (mountain) with Megumi. She is a fast driver, but after some pleading on my part she slows down somewhat.

And on the following day Daiï students have their welcome party on the river-bed of the Futakotama *gawa* (river) where there are large open spaces, a perfect place for a barbecue party.

Paum and a couple of friends go to the lake in a park in Syracuse where they saw the sunset. The weather is nice. She usually come here to roller-blade, but now they visit the coffee house and have chocolate cakes. Next week she will probably come play the guitar here. 'I love summer', she says.

Time flies, and meanwhile *Nhăung* is doing a project for her occupational health course, 16^{th} May 1998 . She had seen the videotape about the systems of transportation and elimination of wastes in Japan.

In Japan the electronic products are so cheap that if someone buy a new model they will leave the old one outside their house for anyone to take. These are often in a perfectly good condition. And if they are unfit to use, they will cut the cord off to make sure that people do not use them by mistake. The costs of the waste elimination services and repairing are higher than buying a new one.

Because of the present economic situation in Daiï my parents and sisters may postpone their trip to Japan until next year.

Paum writes on 28^{th} May 1998 that she has been back from Champaign for two weeks now. She was there on her younger sister's graduation. They will go white water rafting together before her sister goes back to Daiï to start work in June. During her high school, she says, biology was her favourite subject.

Chaucer (*circa* 1340–1400) gives a definitive description about May, 'Hard is the herte that loveth nought in May'. However, this is not in Europe. And in Japan May means nothing of that sort. It is August, the *hachi gatsu* (month eight) anytime, the month *der Liebe*, the season when a girl of approximately twenty chooses to whom she would give her virginity.

Megumi has got a free ticket for two to explore the Tokyo Disneyland for two days and stay one night at the hotel there, so we go there together during 6–7 June 1998. She says the tickets came from a draw made by the company whose *keitai denwa* (mobile phone) she uses.

We are like two kids who on the 6th try the Beaver Brothers Explorer Canoes, Big Thunder Mountain, Cinderella Castle Mystery Tour, Country Bear Theater, The Enchanted Tiki Room, Haunted Mansion, It's A Small World, Mark Twain Riverboat, Meet the World, Pinocchio's Daring Journey,

Pirates of the Caribbean, Skyway to Fantasyland, Snow White's Adventures, Splashdown Photos, Splash Mountain, Star Tours, and Tom Sawyer Island Rafts.

On the following day, 7^{th} June, we are at it again in all earnest. This time we do the Chip'n Dale's Treehouse, Gadget's Go Coaster, Grand Circuit Raceway, Jungle Cruise, The Mickey Mouse Revue, Peter Pan's Flight, Roger Rabbit's Car Toon spin, Star Jets, Swiss Family Treehouse, Visionarium, and Western River Railroad.

Perhaps she likes me?

I never thought I would see the Disneyland here because the tickets are very expensive, but I have already come here three times. It is like living in another world. The parades at night are superb and memorable with all the enthusiasms of their participants.

The Splash Mountain is where you cruise along in a boat looking at the displays of animals and fantasy villages, and then hold your breath while the boat takes a sharp drop in the middle of which there is a flash of light overhead when the Splashdown Photos camera takes a picture of the falling you.

The Star Jets is a *roller-coaster* (switchback) which twists and turns inside a building such that you are surrounded by stars and nebulae wherever you go.

I would never have thought that I could like the Roger Rabbit's Car Toon spin as much as I do. The round cars and the soft, cushioned, spinning bumping with the other cars and into the doors. It is such a relaxing experience, and I find that I like this no less than the Star Jets which was earlier my favourite.

My Syracuse friend will play single again. 'EC40!', (easy for thee) I say to myself borrowing the expression she sometimes uses, she is sweeping the medals from every tournament.

As never shall I play chess with Tanya I shall never play tennis with Paum. Not that I like winning but I do not like losing.

She went to see 'Mulan' on the third week of June, and enjoyed it greatly. This is a story about China and, I should have guessed, Mulan.

As of 30 June 1998 there are a total of 7,536 people of foreign nationals registered here in Meguro. Twenty per cent of these, that is 1,542 people, are from either the Republic of Korea or the People Democratic Republic of Korea (since 1948).

What names can be more misleading than having as the title for a democratic country 'republic' while calling a communist country 'people democratic republic'. A similar thing used to be the case with the Democratic Republic

of Germany or the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (7 October 1949–3 October 1990) which was communist, while the West Germany was called the Federal Republic of Germany, until the re-unification of the two in 1990.

The number of people from other countries are namely from China 1,444, the US 1,094, Philippines 486, the UK 415, Indonesia 214, Germany 192, Australia 184, Nepal 157, France 153, Canada 153, India 134, Daiï 115, Malaysia 102, Brazil 92, Bangladesh 68, Italy 67, Switzerland 59, Sri Lanka 58, Pakistan 49, Iran 44, Sweden 43, Vietnam 38, New Zealand 33, Russia 30, Ireland 29, Spain 28, Denmark 28 and Belgium 25. Among the rest, 446 are from some other countries while 14 are stateless.

I enjoy being with my friends in the Net. I am old, and in my time we called it 'cyberspace'. It is a real world because I, for instance, do not imagine these people up as I do when I write a novel.

This proves that there are more than one real worlds. Though in this case one is only a subset of another, it is still a good start. The possibility is already there.

I do not have to meet them in the spatial world, as different from the c-spatial one. We have no needs for the unnecessary disappointments.

'I agree with you that sometimes we buy too much and make home like a mess', Yo said.

Meanwhile Paum goes to dinners with friends. Together they talk, play games, and then eat some cakes.

I must remember, if Yo comes to Japan, to be her guide and give her free meals.

Paum, 16$^{\text{th}}$ July, has been working on some pathological algorithms. But she has not found any killer paper yet, or so she says.

On 27th July 1998 I complain to myself, 'It's raining half of the time, the other half it is hot all over!' The next day a friend writes to me who lives in Nagasaki, 'My life has been a complete bore for a long period. Everyday is the same old routine and I sometimes wonder how long I'm going to go on like this'.

Between 6$^{\text{th}}$ and 9$^{\text{th}}$ August 1998 I go to the Saitama *ken* (prefecture) for a short home stay for the summer holidays organised by YWCA. I stay at Keiko and Teruyoshi's place. *Toukyou* (Tokyo) is shaped like a dumbbell horizontally placed. Meguro ward where I live is on the right end while Saitama district is on the far left.

The *chi* (city) in Tokyo are Akigawa, Akishima, Choufu, Fuchū, Fussa, Hachiou, Hamura, Higashikurume, Higashimurayama, Higashiyamato, Hino, Houya, Kiyose, Kodaira, Koganei, Kokubunji, Komae, Kunitachi, Machida, Mitaka, Musashimurayama, Oume, Tachikawa, and Tanashi. The *ku* (ward)

are namely Adachi, Arakawa, Bunkyou, Chiyoda, Chūou, Edogawa, Itabashi, Katsushika, Kita, Koutou, Meguro, Minato, Nakano, Nerima, Ōta, Setagaya, Shibuya, Shinagawa, Shinjuku, Suginami, Sumida, Taitou, Toshima; The *machi* (town) are Hinode, Itsukaichi, Mizuho, Okutama, while the only *mura* (village) is Hinohara.

'It is very hot in *Laṃpạng*,' *Nhãung* says on 1st August. She has just come back from a few days in Kaṃbạengbejr and Sukhọdaï.

Kei has just sent me a letter on 3rd August. She says that she has nothing to do but to study Daïï and to write letters, 'so I write letters almost everyday'. But the post office is very far, so she only goes there once a week.

On 9th August she goes to the Rose Garden.

Paum has just finished writing her first conference paper on 10^{th} August 1998 , and has already submitted it. Then she spends the rest of the day making a gift for a friend who has just graduated. For $20 she has bought a tent, only to find out that it is much smaller than what the ad says.

They slept in the woods and it was so cold during the night that she could hardly sleep. They went canoeing along the river. 'It was so beautiful and calm,' she says, 'not too many people around'. She went swimming in the lake which is so big it looks almost like an ocean.

Kei will go to Rayaung.

Meanwhile, Khiang says (11 Aug.) that they have a new project at Phluek Kàeö, namely the 'amazing handicraft boat'.

In Daïï, Kei goes on 15^{th} August 1998 to Kạñcnảḅurị̀ where she rides on an elephant. They come back to Ḅạngkauk on Sunday. She goes to a dentist near her home and have to go there again more than four times. She thinks that her teeth were really bad.

Dentists always find your teeth bad. Somehow they find ways to keep them so that they do not run out of business. It is interesting to see how by some sleight of the hand they juggle from bad inlay fittings, to excessive removals of enamel and dentine, to designing surprise root-treatments.

I have no opinions regarding these people, lest I judge. We seek to repair the Temple of God, but they plot to destroy it. Before we mention this their sin existed but unperceived. Now that it is said there is nowhere for them to hide from His wrath except to repent and turn god-fearing.

Those equipped with no creative faculties always prey on others who have them, catch them unaware, and get away with it. Time this is, when professional codes of conduct of people in such health sectors *art fled to brutish beasts.*

On 16^{th} August 1998 I go on the cruise on the Sumida River with Michiko and Yukiko. We meet at the Hamamatsu Station at 11 am at the gate on the

side towards the Shimbashi Station.

Vultures appear in many forms. Those physicians and dentists who prolong your illnesses or worsen them are one, while people who plagiarise your works another. Why they have such a low respect for themselves I can never imagine. Even research reports and books I write are plagiarised.

But in a way plagiarism is the best kind of flattering. If only *they* also know how to appreciate the works they are copying. Copying a work is the misuse done to the author, misunderstanding one is the misuse done to the work itself.

If you feel you really need to plagiarise my works, then I suggest that it is by no means too difficult to copy but nobly. There is only a fine dividing line between creativity on one hand and vandalism on the other. 'J'ai dit!'

I like dentists and plagiarists who are god-fearing.

Khiang says on 17 August that K will pick me up from the *Ḍaunmuang* Airport on 24 August as he promised he would.

I make a great discover today, 22^{nd} August 1998 , when I find out that if you are a man, then you could sit in front of the computer writing a report all night until, by the time it is morning, your beard has grown noticeably, so now you have the stubble that was not there last night when you first sat down. The funny thing is that you would never think this is strange if it happened while you were sleeping.

I am in Daiï this time from 24 August until 13 September 1998.

During 11–13 September 1998 is the Eighth Working Men Art Exhibition organised by the Meguro *kinrou fukushi kaikan* (Working Men's Welfare Hall). I have one of my pictures exhibited here under the title *Hawaii Kilauea kasan no funkaguchi* (Hawaii Kilauea Crater).

When I was still little what everyone told me implies that Christians are imbeciles. Now I know it was us who were the one. Even in the supposed kingdom of God, Europe, Faith could be so obscurely little. 'How can a man create the earth, not to mention the whole universe?', we ask, 'The sizes are greatly different'. But the imbeciles were us. Who said that God was a man?

Darwin (1809–1882) with his *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) was believed by most to have obliterated the credibility of God by proving that the evolutionary process is not abrupt but continuous. Who said that God's creation was spontaneous?

Percolation is His tool, and it normally looks as abrupt as a singularity. But the percolative *process* necessary to create that instantaneous change is always long. Such a process, for instance, needed for the birth of a single person takes as long as, or even longer than the time needed for the formation of the earth.

Some of the processes may take longer than the age of the present universe.

Percolation was already there when we still did not see it. That does not mean that it did not exist then. Death is always instantaneous, but it was once thought that that was all there was to it. Now we know that death is also a percolation, because aging is a percolative process. Even deaths by an accident are percolation too, since accidents are percolation because it is causal and a causal process is a percolative process.

Karma is clearly a percolative process. And since karma causes deeds, these latter must be a percolation also. The saying 'Karma is deeds', can be put in other words as 'All percolative processes are a percolation'.

The concept of God is the same as that of the Superset and the Creator, which are respectively intrinsically mathematics and physics. Therefore not only that God is limited to no particular religions, but also prophets may ignore neither one of these scientific fields.

By the Superset Assumption, science and all religions are a subset of God. By the Creator Supposition, all creations are but a part of the Creation. In this light, where do all the inter-religion conflicts come in?

Prophets speak the language of God. All writers are prophets, provided that he writes for not only money but also what he knows he has to write. This is why societies where He is feared both produce books of the better quality and respect writers the more. The only thing hindering this short of the absolute heaven for all authors is the imperfection regarding this Holy-mindedness. This is, however, a relieve, for otherwise the world would have been a boring place to be born in indeed.

Prophets are never regarded without respects, except in his own family and amongst his own people. The reason for this is that, if we thought that the most immediate and obvious creation, that our parents created us, is the only one there is to one's life, then necessarily one may never be the only child in the family who reaches God. Putting it simply, the part may never be closer to perfection than the whole.

But the God-loving creatures know better. And they have ample evidences to testify their believe which point to the existence of a common creator, for example all the advances in science, the breaking of athletic records, and the betterment of species through the evolutionary process.

Paum writes on 15^{th} September 1998 to say that she has been away travelling. She went to the Yellow Stone with some friends where there were bisons, elks, mountain goats, big-horn sheep and bull dear. But they missed the bear.

Then they went to NY City to see the US Open. On their way back from NY, last Sunday around 11 pm, they met a severe thunder storm which lasted for about one hour. She had never seen such storm where the flashes of thunder lit up the dark sky every few minutes. The sight was awesome,

but it was awful.

They found out that half of the trees in the city were rooted. The wind speed exceeded 80 mph. The Slocum Height area where she lives in was evacuated. It had been hit by one tornado and ten out of 35 buildings were devastated. The university put her in a hotel for a week with everything paid for, and she is quite happy about this.

On 16^{th} September 1998 I fly JAL from Ḅaṇgkauk to Japan instead of my Northwest flight because there is a strike going on. The pilots of Northwest want a higher salary, and they get it. I did not know that the company has been successful at its cut-throat pricing policy at the expense of its staffs. My actual flight was supposed to be two days ago, on Monday. It rains heavily on the way to the Airport.

Last night (today being 17 Sept.) it rained a lot while I was going to the airport. The traffic was in a very sorry state. At the airport I did not have enough money to pay the airport tax. One reason for this is that the taxi costed more than I had expected, another that I had been playing the piano for too long that I forgot to look at the money.

Mọ turned up out of nowhere and saved my life by lending me the needed 60 *ḅad*s. Then she took me to a restaurant inside the airport, which was by no means cheap. I must remember and buy some cigarettes for her the next time I goto Daiï, because that was what she asked for. Since I have stopped smoking I no longer buy cigarettes for friends.

That is not everything yet. While inside the plane I fainted twice walking along the aisle. No less than 10 JAL hostesses had to take turn looking after me and do things for me after that. I do not know why it happened, I think it must have been either the glass of red wine I drank, or the tobacco smoke, or the air inside the plane, or all these three combined. The side of my head still hurts now from hitting the arm of the passenger seat.

The plane did go through turbulent air once or twice. My seat was an aisle seat. Sitting there I felt fine. But a hostess asked me to give up my seat to a woman, and so I moved over to her place and she to mine. The new seat was by the window on the left-hand side whereas the place where I formerly sat was an aisle seat in the inner row to the right. My first faint happened while I walked from the new seat to the toilet.

I bought myself a new piano while I was in Ḅaṇgkauk. So this had been a somewhat expensive trip. After having the piano I tended to stay home a lot, which was very unusual. Pianos can sometimes turn even a hell into a home. But this was already a home, and now I plan to go there more often.

My father writes to me on 18^{th} September 1998 to say that Megumi had come to visit them with some presents. After having dinner both of my parents sent her back to the International Student Centre of the CMU where she currently stays.

Nhăung says that when young man had fainted it is possibly from a poor health. For examples, anaemia,lack of vitamin or having some problem with your head. Because if you are healthy,you must have normal haemoglobin and haematocrit levels. Hb and Hct combine with the oxygen that is needed by the body tissues especially those brain tissues which are sensitive to the lack of oxygen. You can also faint if you are hypoglycemia (lack of glucose), because the brain tissues are taken off their supply of the glucose.

Kei writes on 20^{th} September 1998 to say that she is sorry for having said and done many bad things to me. But I do not understand what she talks about, for she is the best thing that has ever happened in my life. Perhaps she thinks I am dying because I have fainted twice on the plane.

Nhan, on 21^{st} September 1998 , says that syncope only means that you briefly lose the consciousness due to poor circulation to the brain. Your consciousness will return when you lie down because of the better circulation caused by the supine position. You must avoid keeping your head upright because in so doing you can prolong the unconsciousness period as the result of which in some of the patients there may occur convulsive episodes which can be mistaken as seizures.

There are many causes of syncope. One of these is when you fear something, for example when you see your own blood. This happened once around 1981 when I was stabbed in the palm of my left hand while rehearsing the sword fighting. Yes, rehearsing because that was for a show where you play from memory.

Ironically you only hurt yourself in general during prepared fights, and seldom in a *ṭị kleď* (improvising bouts). This could mean that your subconscious mind can cope better with reflexes than with recitations.

Standing under the sun for long period or drinking may also cause the syncope. The other thing is to avoid holding the urination. If you have symptoms that are not related to these, you should see your doctor to check for your heart because irregular heart beat can cause syncope.

'Other cause[s] of transient loss of consciousness that is not syncope is seizure, it can manifest only atonic attack. Seizure[s] have [a] different mechanism from syncope, it is due to excessive brain activity', she adds.

If you have many episodes of loss of consciousness you could do well to have your EEG (Electroencephalograph) checked. According to her, you would think of syncope when: you have a pre-syncope symptom, for example dizziness or the feeling that you are going to faint, before the loss of consciousness; these episodes of the loss of consciousness is brief and you get better by the supine position; there is no urinary incontinence during the attacks; when you gain consciousness you feel no weaknesses that are localised to only one side of your body. Some medications can also cause you the syncope.

The *shūshoku katsudou* is the Japanese job-hunting. Contrary to what the

people in the US may tell you, these are nothing different from job-hunting elsewhere. *Mā anussaven.* Believe nothing told or written for you about the people of other countries.

Kei asks on 23^{rd} September 1998 how I eat the natto. She wonders if I add to it the soy sauce and *karashi* (mustard), and after that mix it for a long time. She says that if you add a *kimi* (yolk) of an egg it will taste better.

There is no needs to leave the mixture stand for a long time as she said. The important thing is to give it a rigorous stir, and then it is all ready.

She reads news neither in English nor Daiï. This I find it hard to believe, since all my students in Daiï, for instance, never read nothing but Daiï.

According to Asahi *shimbun* (newspaper) the missiles from North Korea were possible because there are at the moment some 2000 engineers from the former Soviet Union inside the country. These people help making and launching missiles toward Japan because they do not like the US.

Unbelievable, isn't it? Why did they not fire Washington instead? Perhaps their technology is still not good enough and Washington is too far away.

I think George Soros in America could perhaps offer these 2000 men jobs in the States so that this business is cut in the bud. I think what they really need is a good job.

But it is also possible that they think deeper over there, that they perhaps want to keep a convenient buffer state. One can never trust someone who has bombed him, can he? Or indeed, can you trust anybody who has ever bombed somebody?

Today is the autumn equinox day, and it is also a national holiday. What I do not understand is why an autumn equinox should have become a national holiday.

No need to say, having loved the natto is another turning point in my life, 24^{th} September 1998 . If you have not loved it, and you want to know what I am talking about, you could try the following method which I have discovered. *Experto credite!* I hated it no less than you do now, but have come to love it, again no less than anybody.

I like natto
(this is not irony or sarcasm, I really like it.)

Nice natto, with shouyu and karashi,
Mixed, marinated, then eaten with rice.
Some have it with eggs, some with kimi.
Even without the two, for me, it's already nice.

Fermented beans, sauce and mustard,
Put together, and taken with gohan.

Don't go look for tamago nor yolk! (Neither exists in the cupboard.)
What's important is, for 15 minutes you should leave it stan'.

There are other experts around. I cannot possibly be the only one to whom this has happened. If this method does not work for you all I can say is, 'Consult another expert!'

Kei says, 'If you add a yolk, you must use raw yolk. After I come home, let's eat together'. She says she loves Daiï and does not want to come back to Japan.

Megumi, on the other hand, does not love the natto as much as we do. She either is from, or has something to do with, Osaka, while the natto is revered only in Tokyo.

I have taught the former Daiï, but not the latter. But I have been together longer with the latter, so I hope both have equally learnt some Daiï from me. And I hope that has been no little amount. My Japanese, however, remains as ignorant as ever and myself, them or no.

On 25^{th} September 1998 I go to Shibuya to have my visa extended. I am going to a conference at the Kawakuchi *ko* (lake) for a few days.

You can never imagine what a *nattou* (natto, fermented soybeans) nut is until you have become one. One either hates the natto or loves it. This is something similar to the Marmite and the Vegemite. I know this because I used to hate, but now like all of them.

It is strange how the absolute hate becomes the absolute love. There can be no middle ground in this case. Once you have loved it, you cannot understand yourself in the past when you used to hate it.

A *natto* nut to a *natto* nut

A *natto* nut to a *natto* nut,
'*Ne! Natto* nut *ni natta no?*'
A *natto* nut replied to a *natto* nut,
'*Nani? Natto* nut *ni natta nan 'tte.*'

'*Nani 'tte nan ka. Natto ni natte mo*
Nanimo nai desho?', continued the first *natto* nut.
'No, I mean, I am not a *natto* nut,
You don't understand me,' the second *natto* snapped.

'I don't understand you? My dear!
I know you are a *natto* nut,' went on the first.
'One shouldn't be called a *natto* nut
Only because one *natto* nut says he is,' quoted the second.

'A *natto* nut knows what only *natto* nut knows.

And that is, one couldn't have become a *natto* nut
Unless another *natto* nut who knows *natto*'s lore
Teach him that lore to become a *natto* nut.'

'And what may that lore be?'
The second *natto* nut stammered
After remaining silent for minutes
By confusion'.

'That life and natto is somehow the same.
You didn't always like it. It was only a game.
Then came a day when something changed your mind
And you thought that, hey! life could be kind'.

Megumi says on 27th September that yesterday they went to a temple to give alms. I think that it was the temple to the north of the town that my parents have been building. 'Bracâo Tón Lhoang', its name is, meaning the big *bracâo* (Buddha, Buddha image, god). The name is in *Lạ̄nnạ*.

In Daiï, the word *bracào* means a god, *brabuddhcào* the Buddha, and *brabuddhrụp* the Buddha image. The name of this temple in Daiï could be something like *brabuddhrụp ongġ yhăị* (big Buddha image).

Ken is a design engineer who writes codes for software tools that support programming on a 32-bit Microchip, the ST20. Sometimes he likes his job, at other times not. He is still doing the Shaolin Kungfu on 1st October.

There is a grading on Saturday, but he will not be there as everything will be in Chinese then and he will not understand.

It is no jest when I said I am not going to graduate. Megumi stays at the hotel near the *Ḍaunmuang* Airport in Bạngkauk, which seems to her like a ghost house. She has arrived there straight from *Jiangmhăị*.

The following day my father writes to say that she had got on along very well with everyone in my family. He tells me to write as often as I want to. 'We all like to hear from you', he says.

Nhăung has written that she has bought a UPS two days ago, this being the 3^{rd} October 1998 . She says that while Megumi was in *Jiangmhăị* she met my parents almost everyday when they had their evening meal together. They wanted to know the way I live in Japan, so they asked her and she should know.

On Saturday 3rd October 1998 I buy a pair of in-line skates from Sports Gallery at Himonya. They cost me 4,980 yen, which is by no means expensive, considering that my happiness depends on it.

Once inside the TIT campus at *Ōokayama* the road finds the Centennial Memorial Building on the right, the library on the left, and then makes a

circle around the large plot of ground lined with the Sakura trees in front of the *honkan* (main building). This is where I practise on my new skates. Going backwards is fun when you know how to do it. I tend to fall down often, and that is nothing funny.

This is 7^{th} October 1998 , you see. You know, when I went to Hawaii there were at least 10 days which I walked about 50 miles a day. There was no public transportation in any one of the islands except the Oahu. So I was walking from town to town as well as walking around.

I have just bought a pair of in-line skates. I am doing it everyday now. I think it will probably be handy when I travel again.

I went to a conference at a place which was beside a large lake and close to the Mount Fuji. I walked around and was not at the conference except when I had to talk and another time when I had to moderate a session. I always walk around during conferences. So you have here perhaps the most uninitiated of researchers.

I gave a speech the other day. But I was reading my own speech because I could not remember it. So it was someone else who won the contest. I enjoy giving speeches, especially when there are some people there to listen to me, because it relaxes me much the same way playing the piano does. But I am terribly bad at both.

On 16^{th} November 1998 ,

I am ugly as a toad

I am ugly as a toad,
You are fair as a cockroach
Which sits upon a boat.

When you approached
I called to you, 'Float!'
You replied, 'No, you just ride on a boat!'

A fiction is never difficult to create. You essentially make in your imagination the world of your own, much the same way that God does in His. Who know, the universe could be merely electric signals going back and forth inside the grey cells of God's brain, and in our own's some people may similarly live. Spare them!

I am a goat

I am a goat.
You are a toad.
I come on a boat.

You ride on the coach
On a road.

'Don't stay forever on the road!'
'Come to the boat!'
'Forget the road!'

On 17^{th} November 1998 Megumi writes what I turn into this poem.

Look at the skies!
You can see a big fireball of the Leonids.
The site offers a live show of Leonid meteors,
a panorama of shooting stars
expected in the early hours of your birthday.
The shooting stars are predicted to appear
in the greatest numbers from 4 to 5 am
The show is expected to be the most
intense and beautiful barrage in 32 years!
I hope you get this message in time.
First of all,congratulations on your happy birthday.

Surely she does not mean '32 years'. This is my 32^{nd} birthday. Did they, the messengers of the Lord, come in 1966 on the very day I was born? But, fortunately, I think that I was born not between 4 and 5 am but in the afternoon, according to what is written anyway.

O Lord, I wish I knew what Your message is. I am a nobody, so sure this is not for me.

O Lord!
Give me not the answers, but
give me the questions,
plenty of courage and
the facility to understand.

Nhăung also sends a 'Happy birthday' by the email. She is going to up to the mountain to look at the raining stars about 5 pm. She is still doing another degree at the Sukhọdaï Dharrmạdhirạj University. Her class has a course work in Bạngkauk in mid-December.

In the end she chooses to use the Pine programme instead of the MS Word to write the card which says, 'Lucky in game and lucky in love'. This reminds me of what we used to sing in the La Traviata, 'Lucky indeed! Good fortune is once again with Alfredo. He is again the winner!'

Well, it is now 18^{th} November 1998 and I was born exactly 32 years ago in 1966. I shall become a poet.

Law of Bad

Never get tired of being bad!
When you do, try relax while bad.
And by and by, no one will be mad
Enough again to call you bad.

That is, when you are no more sad
By the fact that you are being bad.
And if you call this mad
I will be glad
By the fact that you are still bad
By calling this mad.

Start by being bad
For a while first, then being bad
For a long time. Then forever bad.
Don't be sad!
You should be glad
That you are very bad.

'Never married, I am divorced', seems to be a good theme for a poem. But due to the lack of time and space it shall have to wait until another occasion as fits.

Since our divorce

Since our divorce
I've grown up while you've grown old.
Not meeting you is like eating the *nattou*.
You don't like it at first
But you come to love it later.

You never fully understand a poet. I, for instance, could never understand myself.

I am a bat

I am a bat.
You are a rat
Who runs away from a cat
That sits upon a hat.

The rat is fat,
And you are the rat.
The cat
On the hat
Sees that
And it jumps at
The rat,
Not the bat.

I cannot see the Holy Fireworks, however, when they are at their densest. It is funny we should look for signs, considering that God is here everyday, so I am glad the time difference of a few hours between our countries means that it is already light here when this happens.

So presumably all day they do somersaults all over the sky and yet I behold them not for the sun. The first one that I see is not an hour after the midnight has passed, when it is now Thursday 19^{th} November 1998 and my brother's birthday.

I saw the Leonids

I saw the Leonids
Travelled the sky on my birthday.
The first and the most beautiful one
I saw between twelve and one am
Going over
The main building at TIT.

It was large,
Looked more like a firework
Than a meteorite.
Its trajectory was flat,
It was so bright
That night.

Then I left my work
And went up to the roof top
To see more of them.
And I saw more of them.
Another one which I liked
Came at around four a.m.

It gave two pulses
Of cold silvery light
Then dies away
Into the night.
Unlike the other one's warm light

It was not as bright.

Today, Saturday 21^{st} November 1998 , I quietly write some more poems. What do I care if no one thinks these are poems, for time will tell. And there are no limits to time as far as we are concerned.

Silence rules

Silence rules.
It was here before me and you,
So it ruled.
It will be here when we were gone too,
So it will rule.
So it rules.

The road leads ever on and on into the darkness. But the unknown paths are better than the well-trodden ones because they open up more ground for creativity. Never fear the unknown, nor in the known hope to find solace and safety.

Silence or darkness?

Which came first,
Silence or darkness,
I do not know.
If you try coining sentences like
'That darkness is silent,' or
'That silence is dark'
You still get nowhere
Close to the answer.

But since to me silence is virtue
While darkness vice,
I hope the former came first,
So it rules the other one.
Am I right?

Whether a thing is good or not, your promoting it is irrelevant.

Let the silence resound

Since my best was no good
I will let it go.

Retreat with all my might!
Let the silence resound!

Isogaba maware!
Therefore I shall fear no defeats.
When you flee, Fly for your life!
No sound resounds.

We had crabs at our party as well as other things, today being the 28^{th} December 1998 . They were very fresh so they smell and taste very nice. It is a pity that I was in Daïï for only two weeks instead of three. Three would have been just right. Too many things to do in so little time.

I go back to Daïï again during 12–28 December 1998. Now that the piano has become another language of mine, I find myself reading new musics night and day. I read all the periods I know, from before Baroque to after Late Romantic.

This is 29^{th} December 1998 , firstly there are two important terms, one is *status*, the other one *entitlement*. Next, there are two more important terms which will be used later, one is *PhD student*, the other one *PhD candidate*.

The PhD study starts with three years of registered research term with a university. During these three years the researcher is called a *student* even though no studying is done, just research works. Here the status is that of a student.

At the end of the third year, the student either graduates or not. If he could not make it in time for the graduation, and if the teacher thinks that it is still possible for him to get a PhD within two more years, then there are essentially two possible ways. There are many reasons which could result in this, for example if the research topics had been changed too many times.

The first one of these two ways is for the student to register again as a third year student. This he can do two more times, *i.e.* two consecutive years following his actual third-year status. By doing this he can have a student card and can use the university's library.

Another way is via what so-called *entitlement*. The student is doing a research for a PhD and has been registered with the university for three years as required, therefore he becomes entitled to complete what he has been doing within two more years thereafter. This entitlement makes it possible for a PhD student to become a PhD candidate.

This is not necessarily so. A PhD student could become a candidate for the PhD only with the consent of his advising teacher. And his advisor, seeing that he is still doing not too bad in his research at the end of his third year enrolment, would normally advise him to resort to the candidate status. This is especially so if he considers his student not that financially well-off.

A PhD candidate may not use the university's library and he does not have a student ID card. But he works normally with his supervisor otherwise, and his status as a PhD candidate is recognised by the university only because of the consent of his supervisor.

In my case, it was my supervisor who suggested that I resort to become a PhD candidate. Therefore I assume that the university recognises my status as being one also. But if you have to ask someone to make sure that this is so, then probably you should ask my advisor first, not the university's staffs, for the reason given in the explanation of the paragraph above.

This is why I stated Aeronautic and Space Exploration Research as the field which I would like to work in in my application form. It is the field which is most likely to be related to the topic of my research.

I would like to carry on explaining a little bit further about 'PhD candidate'. As I said above, it is three years of being a 'PhD student', and then two more years of being a 'PhD candidate' who is recognised by the university. After these two more years the student is still called a PhD candidate if he has not yet been able to obtained the PhD. But in this case, the university no longer recognise this status of his. And if he happens to be able to finish the research with a result which satisfies his supervisor then, then his supervisor could still recommend him to the university with the research result to entitle him to a PhD.

I should give a summary. A 'PhD candidate' does not hold a student ID card but he is recognised by the university of this status of his. The recognition is in the way that the university would expect to see his final thesis at the end of the year for two more years in a row, as it would a 'PhD student'.

In my last email, I pinned my recognised 'PhD candidate status' down earlier than two more years, ie. until March 2000. This is only because the fact that my supervisor is going to be retired then. But to be honest, I do not think his retirement from the university will matter at all in this 'entitlement'. That is, I really think that the university would still recognise my status until March 2001.

From Shinagawa we go to Ōgaki on 31^{st} December 1998 . Between 1^{st} and 5^{th} January 1999 we are going to Kyushu with the Seishun-18 ticket. Megumi and I travel all the way to *Kyūshū*, which is the big island on the south of Japan, by train during New Year of 1999.

At one station there a sculpture is raised with the writing on the plaque saying that it is on the 36° N latitude. At Kusasenri there are horses standing in a row amidst the mist. The grass is all golden and brown, and the weather is so bad one could hardly see a thing.

Mt Aso in May is said to be beautiful with Azalea's purple. The train from Tsubame to *Kyūshū* has compartments on both sides of the corridor like

trains in Europe. The word *tsubame*, written differently from the name of that city, also means the swallow in Japanese.

On Sunday 3rd January I watch two elderly ladies, who are standing on the opposite sides of the road to each other brushing the sidewalks, as they stop doing that to chat and laugh with each other briefly before resuming what they were doing.

Today we come to as far as the Sakura Island. This is land is a national park and it is very quiet here. It seems a very romantic place and would have been an ideal place for a honeymoon. It has a cone of the volcano both enormous and tall right in the middle.

The ferry coming here from Kyushu takes about fifteen minutes. We cross over in the morning and I stand on the deck at the head of the ferry, feeling myself like di Capricio standing at the head of the Titanic in the film of the same name. I also feel like being Alan Quaterman in the adventure novel. It seems like we are approaching the Treasure Island.

At the ferry terminal there are several telephone booths separated from each other by a partition on which people always hang their things to make their call and then forget about, and leave them there after they finish. Today, for instance, I see one coat and a scarf here. Tomorrow there is going to be another coat and a cap.

The ticket for the ferry costs 150 yen. You only pay on the Sakura Island. There are no reception desks for the tickets on the Kagoshima side.

From the ferry terminal we walk to the Youth Hostel which is eight minutes away on the hill behind it. Further down the road, along the coast, there is the Nagisa path, a lovable walk-way along which you can see the main land of Kyushu and the ferries when they arrive.

There are also the A, B, C, and D courses of the lava trails. If from the terminal you turn left instead of right, you will find a path where you can climb up to the to of the hill from where you can see the sea and the Kagoshima City in the distance.

It is sad when we have to leave this place so early in the morning after having only been here since yesterday, but such is our lives. It is already good enough we have been here.

In a way I am lucky to have Megumi with me because her Japanese is much better than mine, and also she can think and plan things so quickly such that we not only never miss a train but always are on the fastest one to boot.

Of course our fastest trains have nothing to do with the *shinkansen*, dubbed the *bullet* or the *superexpress* trains, but still there are various degrees of express trains not to mention the local ones which stop at each and every station.

The Japanese English is less unique in comparison to none. Thus the *toiret* is a *toilet* and when you think somewhere some wire leaks you say that the electricity is escaping somewhere. 'But it is OK', as Yann will always say in a few years to come.

Trains here in *Kyūshū* are like those third-class ones in Daiï because they have side-framed seats and a narrow shelf next to the window for putting up a table. The windows of both are also of the same style, that is to say, the three-stepped vertically-movable glass panels.

Those fish on the ridge of the roofs, which stick its tail up in the air as though they were practising the yoga, is called the Shachihoko. They have a face like a dragon but their tail is that of a fish. Both the fish and the Asian dragon live in the water, therefore this is the thing which protect the house against fire.

Along our way there is always the big plain with mountains in the background. I like sitting on a train going across *Kyūshū* because you can think about all the things while you sit here looking at the farms, houses, and the plain, all of which are lit by the sunlight of this nice weather. This is peace and beauty.

Trying not to copy others can be difficult. Students, for instance, copy their teachers. High school students take after stars. People always try to imitate a successful someone. Christians want to have the mind of Jesus. And when you say, for instance, that you believe in the sun sign and astrology, well you are copying others too.

The Ohori Park is close to the city centre in Fukuoka. Its landmark is the lake which is divided in the middle by an island and the bridges leading to and away from it. It is a good two-kilometre path around the lake. The Fukuoka Art Museum is in the southeastern part of the park. It contains works by Shigeru Aoki, Marc Chagall (1887–1985), Joan Miró (1893–1983), Hanjiro Sakamoto, Andy Warhol (1929–1987), *etc.*

On 5^{th} January 1999 we pass a place along the track where there are long roads with smooth surfacing. It is close by the field and a waterway. I think one could roller-skate here for hours.

We pass a place where there is a board on which people tie their fortune-strips. Behind it on the background is the sea and beyond this a piece of land. Three children are standing in front of the board with their back turned towards us, adding the strips in their hands to the ones already there.

We pass those parts of the sea where people farm pearls. The pearl farms are essentially the sea next to the coast where poles come up at intervals and black spreadings cover the surface like rafts.

There is a telephone on this car! Its colour is green.

In-fashion now for men are trousers so large that the part which is normally

on the underside of your middle hangs half a thigh below the scrotum. For women you can still see the saggy socks that have been here for years. But on top of that are the shoes with soles thicker than those of the wooden clogs. Sometimes these soles are put on the underside of the boots. Going out is the Doraemon while coming in is the cat Kitty Chan and the frog Keroppy.

I still have one of the earliest breeds of that cat when it first came out about a year ago and still had to make itself known. At and event organised by the Meguro Ward I was the only adult and the last one in the queue of people lining up for a free souvenir. No children in front of me (and that means all the rest of the queue) touched the cat, so sitting there on the table, the last one left, I had no other choices but it to choose. But look at it now! How people are prepared to spend a lot of money on things they have no uses for, simply because there is a picture of that cat on them! People never change!

Nothing puts to sleep like sitting here on a warm train in the afternoon of a cool day.

The back of these two-way seats here work with the same principle as the windscreen-wiper. Here, instead of the wiper, the back cushion remains vertical when you toggle it backwards and forwards.

Hakata's *rāmen* (Chinese noodle) looks like the Chachūmen or the Daiï *ḅamhĭ*. Kyoto's ramen is sweet, transparent and light. The Nagoya's Kishimen, on the other hand, has thick strip-like noodles as those of the Houtou. Its soup is coloured as, and salty like the *shouyu* (soy sauce). But the Champon tops them all. It is a hotchpotch in the Chinese style originated in Nagasaki. The word *champon* means a mixture or a medley.

There is a dome shaped like the peanut. And during the night the nurseries in the fields, which are covered with plastic sheets and look like half-buried tubes, are lit up with lamps on the inside, presumably to keep it warm.

A training *maiko* (dancing girl) is an apprentice *geisha* (professional entertaining lady). Kei says she is one, but I think she must be kidding. Geishas entertain men in who know how many manners. It is one thing if they entertain you, but what man want to marry a practising one.

Sitting on a train I have lots of plans and things that I want to do. There will be little chance of seeing all of them through. I want to do researches on Economics, Mathematics and Language. Among other things I want to visit the Louvre. If you look in my copy of *Le Petit Larousse, dictionnaire encyclopédique* at home, you will find that it is the only item in there which is manually highlighted. It is true I want to walk the Grand Canyon too, and also to draw, or do something with the piano and the violin.

I shall never understand why Nakaura, Okabayashi and Tran are so averse to me. Their keenness for competition I shall never have, nor could ever anticipate.

You feel like sitting in the inside of a huge, long straw, when all the doors separating the cars of the underground train are opened. This is because, without the doors, the remaining parts of the partition on both sides of the door are only as wide as the width of the seats.

'Suck!', I thought to myself, 'This is no moon! This is the Leonids, and it is huge!'

I am now spending all my time outside the lab. Ever since Furuta has told me that I need more than three years to complete my degree I have quitted, and there is no need for me to be here, therefore, except for the emailing.

But nature is still here, and there has been no snow during the past eleven months or so.

Between my PhD and God, what is more important to *you*? If you say it is the latter which is the more important, then you can be sure that is the case for *me* too. This proves the insignificance of a PhD, since even if it is nothing to you who currently are spending you life reading *my* book, then it is next to nothing to the universe. And if to the whole it means naught, then to me who is but a part of that whole it could mean nothing more.

On the other and, if you think my PhD is more important for *you*, then you may have it because I do not want it. I would rather spend all my life doing the various projects, trying to find a perfect one, than settle for a mediocre one now and go to my grave having nothing to say to the whole which is Him. The process of searching is everything. The answer, if it ever or even existed, means nothing.

It is only a pity that he told me this too soon, that is to say that I would need more time when there was still no less than three months before my third year status ends. As my creative power tends to work best towards an approaching deadline, with the project suddenly discontinued in the middle of the acceleration I have no other where to vent it but on literature. So on 9^{th} January I read Ken Follet's *The key to Rebecca*, on the 17^{th} Caleb Carr's *The Alienist*, on the 19^{th} Agatha Christie's *Dead man's mirror*, *Murder in the mews*, *The incredible theft*, and *Triangle at Rhodes*. I write my first book shortly after I go back to Daiï.

Andy is going to be married in Christchurch on Friday 19^{th} February 1999 . Today I write to mum and dad, and to Jeanette and Charlie, in New Zealand.

Then the following day, 10^{th} January, we go to Chiba by train. The weather is simply lovely, with the sun shining. From here we look at Mt Fuji. A couple of pigeons get inside the train, and people feed them with chips. I have seen no other area in Japan which has the number of cute girls exceeding that which I am seeing here now at the eastmost JR station of *Honshū*, in Chiba. I shall never let anybody into this.

However the omnipresents are no secrets, so I can tell you that they are

the Lawson, noodle shops, police booths, Seven-Eleven, and the vending machines.

On 12^{th} January 1999 at the Tamachi Station around fifty pigeons fled together from the ground, leaving only one or two remain standing, which reminds me of the tragic scene, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, how,

> All in a moment through the gloom were seen
> Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
> With orient colours waving: with them rose
> A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
> Appeared, and serried shields in thick array
> Of depth immeasurable. ...

I want to have the water-melon seeds that *Mọ* had sent me back from Kei, 1^{st} February 1999 .

I read *Far from the madding crowd* (1874) by Thomas Hardy (1840–1928). As for my work here, 'tetélestai', as Christ has said on the cross. Though it has started my lifetime research, so 'the petty done, the undone vast'.

I believe no Hardy when he says, 'better wed over the mixen than over the moon', but it is mostly true when he says,

> ...love becomes solicitousness, hope sinks to misgiving, and faith to hope: when the exercise of memory does not stir feelings of regret at opportunities for ambition that have been passed by, and anticipation does not prompt to enterprise.

He could be witty but too pessimistic.

The study of clusters leads to the idea of clusters of languages. I define languages as crucial links that bind society to form social clusters and writing systems as those that bind languages to form language clusters. This is the first time that such binding forces can be mathematically described with precision, since any writing system is essentially a mapping. The problem of binding two languages together is then reduced to the problem of finding a common writing script. Here I choose the roman script because it is already an important binding force which binds together, among others, American, English, Hindi, Pali, and Sanskrit. Even Chinese is already half-bound to this largest cluster, and it would be rather imbecile and impossible to try to reinforce some other script if a smooth globalisation is what one has in mind.

The problem of finding a common written script is in turn reduced to that of finding a one-to-one and on-to mapping between the new script and the existing one. This at once breaks at least two new grounds. Not only will one

have the binding force but also one will be able to describe or even prove it precisely.

And fortunately for those who value the importance of cultural diversities, nowhere in history does one see the loss of these through a redundancy of writing scripts. The Devanagari script is still for writing Sanskrit and the Hebrew script Hebrew, even though either one of these can be mapped on to the roman script one to one. On the other hand, America is not a Commonwealth country even though American and English are linguistically speaking almost identical to each other, let alone sharing a common writing system. The one-to-one mapping allows us to be able to read important things in different cultures in their original languages within our lifetime.

Science, while observing the specifics, strives for the general. Writing system is the rare case which is unambiguous in the non-exact field of language. Percolation also had been non exact, it had been stochastic before some of the regular lattices were found to have exact values of critical probability. If exact values can come out of percolation, 'Why can't a similar thing happen in language?', assuming both percolation and language are now related via the common mechanism of cluster formation.

We are segregated into groups by the languages we use. Therefore an English mathematician is in the language of his profession at sixes and sevens, with the majority of his fellow countrymen because he thinks in Mathematics most days of his life, and even with British engineers because while the latter think in Partial Differential Equations and one-to-one mappings the former tends to think in terms of Rings and isomorphism.

The interrelationship among the various tongues of science and languages which are used to announce scientific thoughts in general is the reason behind the increasing number of interdisciplinary courses, for example Computer Science and Mathematics, and Mathematics with, Business and Management, modern languages, Philosophy, Physics, or Statistics. It is well known that Mathematics are languages and one can talk about, for instance, the *language of trees and graphs* (University of Manchester, 2000).

An English engineer who graduated from a university in Russia will think of himself as an alumnus of England, Russia, and Engineering. He will feel that he belong to all these three different cultures, either together at once or more likely alternately among them. Likewise I feel myself an alumnus of Lāṇṇa, New Zealand, Daiï, and England; and I feel a compassion towards fellow engineers no matter where in the world they are simply because I am an engineer and therefore share with them at least one language in common. Mathematics is a most wonderful language. With it we can achieve a sustainable globalisation at least as far as technologies are concerned. Obviously there were not enough engineers and mathematicians when we built the Tower of Babel.

This same feeling which leads us to feel that we belong to certain groups also makes us feel alien to other groups whose languages we do not know, or conversely feel that people in these groups are alien to us. As far as I know, this is the mother of all racism and misunderstandings. One superpower who writes from left to right hates another who writes from top down. Neither of them can feel themselves at east with certain people who writes from right to left; the former bombs and burns some buildings of these people who return the deeds with equal hostility. When put this way it may all sound so imbecile, but I do not think the whole idea is absurd.

Mathematicians and pianists are men like us. If we realise how things will run its own course once our language is correctly set up such that it is in-tune with the language in question, we will know how close we always are to the reconciling with our enemies.

Leonardo da Vinci wrote with his left hand as many people do in his time, and he wrote in Latin like most educated people did. The only difference is that he wrote not only with his left hand but also from right to left. You have to look at his writings in a mirror to be able to read them, though it should not be difficult to get used to reading the original as is. From this it is then easy to see that English, too, can be written from right to left if we have the mind to.

In the case of Chinese, when properly written it goes from top to bottom with the subsequent lines built leftwards and in layers, but one now finds it being written more and more often using the western and international structure, that is going from left to right and then gradually moving downwards in layers. However, when it comes to reading a sign you had best be prepared to read from right to left as you do Arabic and Hebrew. The reason is obvious if you think of writing from right to left as writing from top to bottom and then move to the left to write the next line when, in this case, each line contains only a single character.

My reasoning, that language at the same time creates and bridges cultural gaps, is not different from what Edward Morgan Forster (1879–1970) means when he says, 'Only connect,' and make this the theme of one of his book †. It is amazing how, for instance, a first year student in Astrophysics may already identify himself with physicists, having not even begun to learn his subject, and how he already seems esoteric to other people. And if we only think that when he finally graduates after two years of reading subjects in Astrophysics at half pace, he already belongs to another world, then we must wonder what languages can do to us.

One of the things that make translation interesting pastimes is the false friends one comes across. One can have false friends across two or more languages, within the same language, or even among jargon of different fields

† E M Forster. *Howards End.* 1910

within one or more language. In French they are called *faux amis*. Examples of these are, *la déterminant* means the determinant, but *la détermination* is the solution; *pouvoir* to be able to, but *pourvoir* provide.

False friends can be philosophical and at times enlightening, for example *Fr. le hasard* means *chance* or *luck* and *Ger. die Redaktion* actually means *editorial staff*. Also, *Ger. also* means *therefore*, *denn* is *because* and if one wants to say *then* then one uses *dann* because that is what it means.

Many of the characteristics of English is German, for example *Ger. wo* is *where* and *bei* is *by*, consequently we have *wobei*, which is *whereby*.

As language changes, evolves and develops, the best thing to do when translating an old text is to use a dictionary of the language of the period contemporary to it. The older the manuscript is, the more one should think of it as being different from the modern language. Systematic changes in spelling is not unusual. Many words in German have changed *th* in their spelling into *t*, for example *der Wert*, value (*Werth*). Good modern dictionaries usually list obsolete meanings, but most probably would not give old spellings.

As example of an obsolete meaning, *Fr. renfermer* used to mean *to contain*. It now means *to conceal*.

The number of different meanings of each word in a language can be thought of as being the coordination number of that word. Therefore if we define all things in terms of their attributes and represent these by generators or nuclei in Voronoi networks, then everything can be represented by the vertices in this n-dimensional space.

In this way one can represent everything in any universe as points in the space of attributes. One can increase the number of attributes one will take into account. The higher this number is, the more vertices one obtains. As the number of attributes increases, some of the vertices split into different ones. Two adjacent vertices is differentiated from each other by a single attribute.

The number of attributes is equal to the number of dimensions, which is n. Not every vertex will split when n is increased. Those having nothing to do with the new attribute, in other word dimension, added will remain the same.

All members of any d-polytope, $d < n$, share exactly d attributes among one another. Though the case when $d = n$ could be mathematically termed as a *trivial* case, which represents the interrelationship among all things, in reality it is a set of entities which includes everything in the strictest sense within it, *i.e.* all real and imaginary things.

Notice that, although the number of dimensions may be high, the space being considered is a Euclidean one. Also, the points in this space are sparsely distributed in general, and the higher the dimension, the more sparsely populated the the space becomes.

On the other hand if one pays attention to words instead of attributes, one may represent them as entities or nuclei within some n-dimensional networks. One is not restricted to put only one language into this imaginary space. In fact, one can put all the words in all languages of the universe into it. Contrary to the previous case of attribute space considered, in this case the number of dimensions n can be arbitrarily chosen and is not affected in any way no matter how many languages or how many words one has in, or later adds to, the space.

Since it is always possible to choose n to be comparatively low, this second space is generally a topological one where only connections between words count, disregarding the winding or tortuosity of the paths.

Two words which are synonyms to each other are connected by a line which intersects no other lines. The number of lines connected to a word represents the *coordination number* C_n of that word. Generally speaking, C_n's of nouns are small compared with those of verbs and prepositions, the latter probably taking the lead.

Because there are more than one lines representing the same meaning among three or more words, more precisely the number of lines equals to the number of words involved, this approach therefore necessarily leads to redundancy.

To be more computationally economic, instead of the word-centred connections just considered, one may consider tessellation of space in n-dimensions by partitions whose centres are all things, both material and abstract. One needs not choose n as high as in the case of the space of attributes, but can simply choose any arbitrary integer $n \geq 2$.

Now the words are represented as vertices and the space is topological. If one links every vertex to its nucleus, then one obtains a network where C_n of a vertex represents the number of different meanings of a word, while C_n of a nucleus represents the number of words, both inter- and intra-lingual, which are synonyms among one another.

If one chooses to keep accounts of three database files, one for each of the following files which respectively contain words, things (or their representation), and mapping or cross-links among items between the first two files, then presumably one has reduced the space and retrieval time requirements to the minimum possible. This is the idea behind most of the database methods, described in graphical, geometrical, topological, and tessellational context.

One possible application of this visualisation is in the compilation of dictionaries. If one were to put all the languages of the world into three such files, and then add only one more attribute to each of the words in the word-file, namely the name of the languages it comes from, then in theory one would be able to immediately compile a dictionary between any two languages one may wish to.

That is, of course, provided that one assumes that it is always possible to do the translation purely in terms of equivalence among words and expressions, without having to resort to any lengthy description. Though this may seems to be a heavy requirement at first sight, it is actually not so as we will see.

I maintain that whenever one translates, one summarises. And since there is no limit to the number of ways that one can summarise, by the reason of free will of the human mind, one will always be able to find equivalences to any translatable thing from among all the expressions and words in a language.

If we suppose that the contrary is true, in other words that one cannot accept summarised word or expression as equivalent meaning of another word or expression. Then it would become almost impossible to translate anything except perhaps a few nouns.

It would not be possible, for example, to find anything that means *must* or *have to* from the rich pool of Japanese vocabularies, because no such word exists. Instead of saying that one must do something, in Japanese one can only say that the idea that one may not do something will not be realised. One must opts for the form V-*nakerebanaranai*, *nakereba* following the verb stem being the conditional form of the verb and *naranai* means *will not become*, thus *that I will not get married will not do* or *it is out of question that I will not get married.*

Therefore if one is not to refute the majority, if not most, of the translations made from Japanese into English to date, one necessarily needs to refute the supposition above instead. Therefore, by *reductio ad absurdum* the original statement is proved.

Then one also needs to include in the word file expressions, for example *at sixes and sevens*, as well as phrasal verbs and many other combinations of words some of which are characteristics to the particular languages considered.

This is by no means too difficult a thing to do, because anyone who considers himself familiar with a certain language will consider these things of that language as much entire units as individual words, if not even more so. It is in a certain way true that, when one is young one thinks in terms of words, as one gets older one tends to think more and more in terms of expressions.

An additional fourth file containing a mapping list of all words of each language could help facilitate or streamline the retrieval and the compilation, but cannot be considered essential, the core files being the three files already mentioned.

My career as a translator can be traced back to the year 1988 during my third year at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University in Daiï where I read Mineral and then Electrical Engineerings. I used to translate technical papers, mainly IEEE's, inside my head and read aloud the translation in Daiï while someone among my classmates, summarising what I said in his own words, copied it down on paper. This used to be one of my various sources of income which

requires less effort than, for example, teaching school children and high school students.

The years 2000–2001, three years after the economic crisis of Daiï and East Asian countries, found me again translating for a living. My self confidence in written Daiï has never been very high up to that time. But truly this is the case where necessity is the mother of inventions, I found myself for the first time not only translating Japanese, German, Portuguese, but most of them into Daiï to boot.

I started learning German at the Goethe Institut in Ḅaṇgkauk in 1991, a few months after having returned from my traineeships with Ganzinform in Budapest through AIESEC. I got an *A* from a course in German literature that I took at TIT in 1997.

This good result owes much to Professor Ishikawa himself who exceptionally allowed my report to be written in English, as I doubt whether I could have written it half as well in Japanese. In a way, this report summarises what I have learnt in that course as well as my experience doing the sixth form English at Ashburton College, New Zealand.

Having planned to do a PhD in translation studies and changed to chemical engineering by November 2000, I still attended some of the seminars organised by the translation group at the Centre of Computational Language during the first half of 2001.

The talk given by Michael Hoey from the University of Liverpool was quite interesting. He studies translation and represents repetitions by bonds. Considering each sentence and number them, he then count the bonds in each of them and see how they increase or decrease in the process of translation. These bonds or repetitions are defined to be the one to one correspondences between the source and the target texts.

He divides repetitions in any language into eleven different kinds described as *simple* (planet, planets), *complex* (planet, planetary), *pro-forms* (planets, they), *simple paraphrase* (path, track), *co-reference* (Clinton, the American President), *ellipsis* (some astronomers, one $\emptyset$), *particular-general* (Pluto, planet), *complex paraphrase* (solar, sun), *closed set* (Pluto, Neptune), *antonyms* (small, massive), and *representative-represented* (Russia, Mr Yeltsin).

In my idea, no less interesting is to consider each word as a vertex with bonds linking it with other neighbouring ones. Neighbours in this sense are not locational, Euclidean ones since words very far apart in one context can become close together in another, for example an eye and an eye of a needle. The coordination number is then the total number of bonds connecting to that word vertex.

One can hardly find a completely one to one mapping across languages to be certain, because neither the coordination number nor the neighbourhood of the words translated would stay the same.

One interesting thing is to find out whether there is any pattern of change in the coordination number when one translates. No less interesting is to find out whether one can predict an expected coordination number of texts in a certain context, for example whether it is true that scientific writings have lower coordination numbers than literature.

A typical process of translation concentrates on vertices, that is to say, words. Would it not be better if the emphasis is made on the links or bonds instead? Creating a table of bonds may require some work but it will help towards the speed and quality of the translation in the long run since translating bonds is easier to do than translating vertices. Moreover, it is a more accurate because by definition bonds are those things which the vertices represent.

Derivatives of two different words can be neighbours among themselves, but they are not neighbours to their parents since they function differently. For example, an adjective derived from a noun is not usually a neighbour of that noun.

Words which look similar to each other are not necessarily neighbours, for example *cursive* and *cursed*, the former one being grammatical jargon. Similarly a *cursor* is a noun and computer jargon while a *curser* means one who curses; they are not neighbours.

The three seminal papers by Voronoi which I translated and wrote as the book *Voronoi translated* (K Tiyapan, 2001) are slightly different from the version included in my other book *Percolation within percolation and Voronoi Tessellation* (K N Tiyapan, 2003). For one thing, in the latter three there is no words 'vertice'. That word is used in the book to mean v_i, where i is some integer, as contrasted with a vertex, say v_3, with a definite integer assigned, and vertices, for example when addressing v_1, v_2 and v_3 together.

The word *vertice* actually exists in the Latin language as a declension of the word *vertex*, though its meaning there is not directly related to the sense that I used for the translation in my book.

Some authors, however, unknowingly use *vertexes* (*cf* Pujara and Shanbhag, 1992) which is nowhere to be found in the original Latin. † If their use is deliberate and if it is not an American spelling, then their reason for using this spelling is beyond me. *Vertex* should not have the same plural form as *sex* because in Latin the former is in the third, while the latter the second declension.

Vertex is the nominative form and is declined as *sg.nom.* and *voc.* vertex, *acc.* vertic*em*, *gen.* vertic*is*, *dat.* vertic*ī*, *abl.* vertic*e*, *pl.nom.*, *voc.* and *acc.* vertic*ēs*, *gen.* vertic*um*, *dat.* and *abl.* vertic*ibus*, while *sex* is the stem the singular nominative

† L R Pujara and Naresh Shanbhag. Some stability theorems for polygons of polynomials. *IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control.* Vol. 37, No. 11, 1845–1849. November 1992.

form of which is *sexus*, which is declined as *sg.nom.* sex*us*, *voc.* sex*e*, *acc.* sex*um*, *gen.* sex*ī*, *dat.* sex*ō*, *abl.* sex*ō*, *pl.nom.* and *voc.* sex*ī*, *acc.* sex*ōs*, *gen.* sex*ōrum*, *dat.* and *abl.* sex*īs*.

Since the spelling check of the programme *emacs* thinks that *vertexes* is correct, perhaps it is an American spelling.

Another difference is that I used the word *integer* here in places where the term *integral number* is used in the book. The latter is closer to what Voronoi has written.

Many authors use the term *integer number*, for example Fred Hoyle and many of the Cambridge physicists. The reason is obvious, that is to avoid a possible confusion between the integral in this sense and the integrating *integral*.

Even though there are many translation machines available and machine translation is commonly used to produce the first translated draft which greatly speeds up the process, especially in a more straight forward work or in a commercial setting, translation is more an art than a science.

Generally speaking, a translation is a mapping which is many to many, since on the one hand the original text can be interpret in many different ways, and on the other there are many possible ways to put each of these interpretations into words in the target language. Even for those who argue that it is a science, the nature of this science must necessarily be inexact.

Writing system, on the other hand, is isomorphic and therefore exact. If we represent a writing system by a function $\aleph(\cdot)$, then we have the following systems some of which are my own adaptation and therefore differ sometimes from the reference given.

The convention I use is $\aleph$(Language) = $\big\{$[consonants], (vowels), ⟨accented characters⟩ $\big\}$. Note also that some of the consonants which come with an inherent accent are not considered accented consonants.

The 72 countries which participate in the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002 are listed in Table 1 together with their languages.

Table 1 *Commonwealth countries and their languages*

Country (population), main languages
Anguilla (12,132), English
Antigua and Barbuda (66,970), English, local dialects
Australia (18,950,108), English, about 50 Aboriginal languages
Bahamas (297,852), English, Creole
Bangladesh (131,269,860), Bangla, English, Urdu
Barbados (275,330), English, Bajan
Belize (241,546), Creole, English, Spanish, Mayan, Garifuna
Bermuda (62,912), English, Portuguese

Botswana (1,479,039), Setswana, various Bantu and Khosesan languages, English
Brit. Virgin Islands (20,812), English
Brunei (343,653), Malay, English, Chinese
Canada (31,330,255), English, French, German, Italian, Ukranian, Chinese, Spanish
Cameroon (15,891,531), 24 major African language groups, English, French
Cayman Islands (35,527), English
Cook Islands (20,407), Maori, English
Cyprus (762,887), Greek, Turkish
Dominica (70,786), French patois, English
England (49,495,000), English, Panjabi, Urdu, Hindi, Cantonese, Patois Bengali and others
Falkland Islands (2,826), English
Fiji (823,376), Fijian, Hindustani, (Fiji Bat), English
Gambia (1,381,496), Mandinka, Wolof, Fulfulde, English, French
Ghana (19,271,744), Twi, Mole-Dagbani, Ewe, Ga-Adangbe, Huasa, English
Gibraltar (29,272), Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, English, Russian
Grenada (89,227), French-English-African patois, English
Guernsey (64,080), English, French
Guyana (703,399), English, Hindi, Urdu, Native American dialects
India (1,029,991,145), Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Kashmiri, Kannada, Oriya, Malayalam, Punjabi, Assamese, Sanskrit, English, and over 16,00 dialects
Isle of Man (73,117), English, Manx Gaelic
Jamaica (2,665,636), Patois (Creole), English
Jersey (88,915), English, French, Norman-French dialect
Kenya (29,250,541), Kiswahili, local languages, English
Kiribati (87,025), Gibertese (I-Kiribati), English
Lesotho (2,166,520), Sesotho, English, Zulu, Xhosa
Malawi (10,154,299), Chichewa, Bantu languages, English
Malaysia (22,229,040), Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese dialects, Tamil, various local languages, English
Maldives (310,764), Divehi, Arabic, Hindi, English
Mauritius (1,196,172), Creole, English, French, Hindi, Urdu, Hakka, Bhojpuri
Montserrat (7,574), English
Mozambique (19,614,345), Bantu languages, Portuguese Swahili, Makua, Ronga, Tsongan, Muchope
Namibia (1,674,116), Ovambo and various African languages, English, Afrikaans, German
Nauru (10,704), Nauruan, English
New Zealand (3,697,850), English, Maori

Nigeria (117,170,948), Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, Fulfulde, about 200 local languages, English
Niue (2,000), Niuean, English
Norfolk Islands (1,912), Norfolk, English
Northern Ireland (1,663,000), English, Irish (Gaelic)
Pakistan (144,616,639), Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi, Urdu, English
Papua New Guinea (4,811,939), Melanesian Pidgin (Tok Pisin), Motu, Enga, over 700 Melanesian and Papuan languages, English
Samoa (235,302), Samoan, Tongan and other Polynesian languages, English
Scotland (5,120,000), English, Scots, Gaelic
Seychelles (79,672), Creole (Seselwa), French, English
Sierra Leone (5,509,263), Krio, Mende, Temne, English
Singapore (4,300,419), Malay, Chinese dialects, Tamil and English
Solomon Islands (470,000), Melanesian pidgin, about 80 local languages, English
South Africa (43,981,758), Afrikaans, English, Zulu, Xhosa, Siswati, Ndebele, Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho, Tswana, Tsoknga, Venda
Sri Lanka (19,408,635), Sinhalese, Tamil, English
St Helena (7,197), English
St Kitts and Nevis (38,756), English, local dialect
St Lucia (158,178), English, French patois
St Vincent and the Grenadines (115,942), English, French patois
Swaziland (1,004,072), Siswati, English
United Republic of Tanzania (31,962,769), Swahili, English, various local languages
Tonga (109,959), Tongan, English
Trinidad and Tobago (1,169,682), English, Spanish, Hindi, French dialect
Turks and Caicos (18,122), English
Tuvalu (10,730), Tuvaluan, Vaitupu and other dialects, English
Uganda (23,451,687), Swahili, Arabic, Luganda, Ateso, Luo, other local languages, English
Vanuatu (192,848), Bislama, various Melanesian languages, English, French
Wales (2,921,000), Welsh, English
Zambia (9,872,007), Bemba, Luapula, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Kikaonde, Lunda, Luvale, English, Swahili
Zimbabwe (11,272,013), Shona, Ndebele, English, and many local languages

$\aleph(\text{Bengali}) = \{[\text{k, kh, g, gh, ṅ; c, ch, j, jh, ñ; ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ; t, th, d, dh, n;}$

p, ph, b, bh, m; y; r; l; ś; ṣ; s; h], (a; ā; i; ī; u; ū; ṛ; e; ai; o; au; ṃ; ḥ)}

ℵ(Gaelic) = {[b; bh; c; ch; d; dh; f; fh; g; gh; h; l; m; mh; n; p; ph; r; s; sh; t; th], (a; à; ao; e; è; i; ì; o; ò; u; ù)}, (*cf* Robertson and Taylor, 1993).

ℵ(Hindi) = {[k, kh, g, gh, ṅ; c, ch, j, jh, ñ; ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ; t, th, d, dh, n; p, ph, b, bh, m; y; r; l; v; ś; ṣ; s; h; ḳ, ḳh, g̣, z, ṛ, ṛh, f], (a; ā; i; ī; u; ū; ṛ; e; ai; o; au)}, (*cf* Snell, 2000).

ℵ(Hungarian) = {[b; c; cs; d; dz; dzs; f; g; gy; h; j; k; l; ly; m; n; ny; p; r; s; sz; t; ty; v; z; zs; bb, cc, dd, ...], (a; á; e; é; i; í; o; ó; ö; ő; u; ú; ü; ű)}, (*cf* Magay and Országh, 1981).

ℵ(Latin) = {[b; c; d; f; g; h; k; l; m; n; p; q; r; s; t; v; x; y; z], (a; ā; e; ē; i; ī; o; ō; u; ū; y)}, (*cf* Betts, 2000). ℵ(Polish) = {[ą; b; c; ć; d; ę; f; g; h; j; k; l; ĺ; m; n; ń; p; r; s; ś; t; w; z; ź; ż], (a; e; i; o; ó; u; y)}, (*cf* Gotteri and Michalak-Gray, 1997).

ℵ(Russian) = {[b; ch; d; f; g; k; l; m; n; p; r; s; sh; shch; t; ts; v; **w**; x; z; zh], (a; e; ē; y; ie; o; i; e; iu; ia)}, (*cf* Farmer, 1996).

ℵ(Sanskrit) = {[k, kh, g, gh, ṅ; c, ch, j, jh, ñ; ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ; t, th, d, dh, n; p, ph, b, bh, m; y, r, l, v; ś, ṣ, s; h; ṛ, ṛh; ṃ; ḥ; f, z, kh, g, q], (a; ā; i; ī; u; ū; ṛ; e; ai; o; au)}

ℵ(Serbo-Croat) = {[b; c; č; ć; d; đ; dž; f; g; h; j; k; l; lj; m; n; nj; p; r; s; š; t; v; z; ž], (a, e, i, o, u)}, (*cf* Javarek and Sudjić, 1963).

ℵ(Slovak) = {[b; c; č; ch; d; ď; dz; dž; f; g; h; j; k; l; ľ; ĺ; m; n; ň; p; qu; r; ŕ; s; š; t; ť; v; w; x; z; ž], (a; á; e; é; i; í; y; ý; o; ó; u; ú; æ; ia; ie; iu; ô; ou; au; eu)}, (*cf* Naughton, 1997).

ℵ(Spanish) = {[b; c; ch; d; f; g; h; j; k; l; ll; m; n; ñ; p; q; r; s; t; v; w; x; z], (a; e; i; y; o; u)}.

ℵ(Swahili) = {[b; ch; d; dh; f; g; gh; h; j; k; kh; l; m; n; ng'; ny; p; r; s; sh; t; th; v; w; y; z], (a; e; i; o; u)}, (*cf* Russell, 1996).

ℵ(Vietnamese) = {[b; c; d; đ; g; h; k; l; m; n; p; q; r; s; t; v; x; y], (a; e; i; o; u), ⟨a, ă, â, e, ê, i; o, ô, o', u, u'; a, á, à, ả, ã, ạ; e, é, è, ẻ, ẽ, ẹ⟩ }, (*cf* Vuong and Moore, 1994).

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cf R Farmer. *Beginner's Russian.* 1996; N Gotteri and J Michalak-Gray. *Polish.* 1997; V Javarek and M Sudjić. *Serbo-Croat.* 1963(1972); T Magay and L Országh. *A concise Hungarian–English dictionary.* 1981(1990); J Naughton. *Colloquial Slovak.* 1997; B Robertson and I Taylor. *Gaelic.* 1993; J Russel. *Swahili.* 1996; R Snell. *Beginner's Hindi script.* 2000; A Wilkes and N Nkosi. *Zulu.* 1995; A Wilkes and J Shackell. *Welsh for beginners.* 1989; T D Vuong and J Moore. *Colloquial Vietnamese.* 1994.

ℵ(Welsh) = {[b; c; ch; d; dd; f; ff; g; ng; h; l; ll; m; n; p; ph; r; rh; s; t; th], (a; e; i; o; u; w; y)}, (*cf* Wilkes and Shackell, 1989).

ℵ(Zulu) = {[b; bh; c, ch, nc, gc; d; dl; f; g; h; hh; hl; j; k; kh; n; ng; ny; p; ph; q, qh, nq, gq; sh; t; th; tsh; v; x, xh, nx, gx], (a, e, i, o, u; w, y)}, (*cf* Wilkes and Nkosi, 1995).

In particular, in Latin I use *ae* for æ and *oe* for œ, in Polish Ĺ for ł, and in Norwegian ó for ø.

It is sad but true that not a few linguists think that *writing* is not language †. These people probably have never come across Chinese where it is precisely the writing that holds everything together.

In fact it is *transcription* which is not language and which is often mistaken as writing. Writing cannot be separated from grammar so long as we cannot say that using 'teh' for 'the' is grammatically correct in English. It is another matter to replace all the e's with h's and vice versa, but then we will be talking about transcriptions not writing.

There is only one writing for each language. For if there were to be more than one, all of them would have to be isomorphic among one another and therefore would come to the same thing differing only in styles.

Language is the stuff that writing is made of, and conversely writing is the stuff which language is made of. However, writing is not always language. There are languages without writings and vice versa. In other words, the two are not isomorphic to each other.

Compared to Daiï, with its strong influence from Sanskrit, Lāṇṇạ is much closer to Pali. This can be seen by comparing the spelling of the same word in both languages. For example, the Sanskrit word *karma* in Pali is *kammaṃ*, while it is respectively *karrm* and *kamṃ* in Daiï and Lāṇṇạ. Also, in Lāṇṇạ only one *s* is used in general, while in Daiï there are two, ie *s* and *ṣ*. The Sanskrit *ś* in Lāṇṇạ has only been later added, and is seldom used, while in Daiï its importance is much higher.

The following Pali letters of the alphabet

k	kh	g	gh	ṅ
c	ch	j	jh	ñ
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ
t	th	d	dh	n
p	ph	b	bh	m

find their equivalences here in Lāṇṇạ as

† John Algeo. *Problems in the origins and development of the English language*. 3rd ed. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1966 (1982).

vagġ ka	ka	kha	ga	gha	nga
vagġ ca	ca	cha	ja	jha	ẏa
vagġ ṭa	ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa
vagġ ta	ta	tha	da	dha	na
vagġ pa	pa	pha	ba	bha	ma.

The only difference is that, in place of *ṅ* and *ñ* we have now *ng* and *ẏ*. The rest are those non-*vagga* consonants, namely *y, r, l, v, s, h, ĺ, ḥ*, which remain the same in Lāṇṇạ as they are in Pali.

There are 41 consonants in Lāṇṇạ,

k	kh	g	ġ	gh	ng		
c	ch	j	z	jh	ẏ		
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ			
t	th	d	dh	n			
p	p̣	ph	f̣	b	f	bh	m
y	r	l	v	s	ś		
h	Ĺ	(w)	ḥ	ý			

with some other special combinations, for example *ss* and *naa*.

There are 8 special combinations for isolated vowels, which are simply written here as *a, ạ, i, ị, u, ụ, ẹ*, and *ou*, the same way as when they occur as a vowel for consonants.

In front of each of these, when they immediately follow other letter, is added *w*. Isolated vowels are called *sra lạuịa*. The vowels occurring in combination with other consonants are *a, ạ, i, ị, u, ụ, e, ẹ, ae, ạe, ue, ụe, ai, ou, ọu, ọ, ao, aṃ, aṇg, aṅg, o, au, aụ, ạu, ua, ụa, ia, ịa, ua,, ụa, oe, ọe*.

The consonant tails and hanging consonants are *ỳ, ỳh, ṭ̀h, ǹ, p̀, p̀h, b̀, m̀, ỳ, l̀, s̀*.

The writing of the American Sign Language, developed and used by Stokoe *et al* (1965) to compile a dictionary of ASL †, is a big step forward for the language. But one drawback is that it uses symbols which cannot be reproduced easily on word processors or TEX.

I briefly learnt Japanese Signs in 1998 in Meguro-ku, Tokyo. This language is a descendant of American Signs and has inherited a great part of its features. But is was not until early 2002 that I came across the symbolic writings developed by Stokoe.

† William C Stokoe Jr, Dorothy C Casterline and Carl G Croneberg. *A Dictionary of American Sign Language on Linguistic Principles*. Gallaudet College Press, 1965.

This writing system looked discouragingly complicated, so I tried to develop my own writing system for British Signs. While the work was going on, I turned to look again at Stokoe's system and found to my surprise that despite its seemingly complexity it is very systematic and efficient.

So I started to look at it in detail and I began to apply my experience with other writing systems to create a system using the English alphabet that will be isomorphic with his, because I prefer the roman letters to geometric representations in the matter of writing.

In essence, in the new system I try to follow his conventions whenever I can, in order that those who are already familiar with his system will have the least difficulty in following mine.

Among other things, I avoid the use of capital letters in the middle of a sentence, use English consonants for the Dez symbols, vowels and suffixes for Sig symbols, and a set morpheme for each of his Tab symbols.

In order to make my system self-explanatory, I separate the different allochers which share the same symbol, for example the Dez *A* has now become *t*, *ts* or *tz* respectively where they used to be the allochers *a*, *s* and *t*.

I try to find a solution which is easy to remember, for example the Sig for a divergent action that used to be represented by the division symbol, is now the suffix *~ide*, for div*ide* or ch*ide*. The results are listed in Table 2.

As this is an isomorphic writing of Stokoe's system, the contents of the latter would go nowhere, so it is possible to polish the system further after this and this I intend to do.

Table 2 *Roman writing of Stokoe's system for ASL*

Tab

(*nte*)	zero; neutral	*fca*	face, whole head
fhe	forehead, brow, upper face	*mvi*	mid-face, eyes and nose
cni	chin, lower face	*cke*	cheek, temple, ear, side-face
nke	neck	*tra*	trunk, body from shoulders to hips
mra	upper arm	*mya*	elbow, forearm
spa	supine arm or wrist	*pro*	prone arm or wrist

Dez

t, *a* compact hand
ts, fist, *s* compact hand
tz, *t* compact hand
b, flat hand
bs, flat hand with four fingers separated
s, spread hand
c, curved hand
d, contracted hand

f, *three-ring* hand
g, *g* index hand
gd, *d* index hand
h, index and second finger extended; *h*
huw, hun, the *u* allocher of *h*
how, hon, the *n* allocher of *h*
j, *pinkie* hand
k, like *g* but thumb touches the middle phalanx of the 2nd finger
kow, kon, the *p* allocher of *k*
l, angle hand; thumb perpendicular with the index finger
z, *cock* finger; thumb and the first two fingers spread
p, tapered hand; fingers curved and squeezed together; *o*
r, *warding off* hand; the 2nd finger crosses over the index
v, *victory* hand
w, three-finger hand
x, hook hand; index hooked
y, horns hand (thumb and little finger)
ys, horns hand (index and little finger)
q, the little finger bent in from a spread hand

		Sig	
u	**u**pward,	*o*	d**o**wnward
uo	**u**p-d**o**wn,	*i*	r**i**ghtward
e	l**e**ftward,	*ie*	s**i**de-to-sid**e**
a	tow**a**rd signer,	*ao*	**a**way fr**o**m signer
oa	t**o**-**a**nd-fro,	*ui*	s**upi**nating rotation
iu	prone rotation,	*ou*	twisting
ue	nodding, bending,	*oe*	**o**pe**o**ning
ae	closing,	*eu*	wriggling of fingers
ia	c**i**rcular **a**ction,	*~ach*	convergent action; appro**ach**
~act	cont**act**ual action, touch,	*~asp*	linking, gr**asp**
~oss	cr**oss**ing action,	*~ent*	entering action
~ide	divergent action, separate,	*~int*	**int**erchanging action

Other auxiliary symbols

ei, side-by-side hands
ai, one hand held behind the other
–t, repeat the whole Sig
–ts, two or more repetitions
–l, with finger bent, *i.e.* c**l**awed
–ate, altern**ate**ly by one hand and then the other
–us, new Dez th**us** transformed
–nd, compou**nd**ing
–n–, a**n**d
–d–, *Ger. dann*; then

Others are represented by accents above or below a letter.

Let x be an arbitrary letter, then $\hat{x}$ and xy both means that the elbow or forearm is prominent, $\grave{x}$ the lower hand held below the other, while $\acute{x}$ the hand above the other. If x is a consonant then $\dot{x}$ means that a non prominent thumb or finger is extended or used as Sig, whereas if it is a vowel it would mean a short or sharp movement.

As a student representative in the Graduate School Council I suggest that every PhD student has a tutor in addition to his supervisor. This can be implemented by making sure that every lecturer be a tutor to as many other PhD students as the number of the same under his supervision.

This could help broaden the mind of both students and supervisors. Tutors can also give counsels to students which could lighten the problems of living in a city, for example what to do when your flat mate is a drug-addict.

Every lecturer who supervises a PhD student should have at least attended an intensive course on Philosophy. For one thing, that is what the 'Ph' in 'PhD' stands for anyhow.

UMIST, or if it joins the University of Manchester in the future then the latter, should open its own publishing house. It is by no means a difficult task and does not have to be very big in the beginning, but it will be very valuable both to the high reputation of UMIST and to the academic community at large. University printing houses such as the Clarendon or the Oxford University Press plays an important role in distributing local works far and wide.

This publishing house should start by publishing, in small quantity, only books written by the staffs of the University of Manchester and UMIST. These books could be marketed directly to libraries all over the world.

Therefore it is important to build up a network of libraries as well as to establish contacts with them. These contacts can be strengthened with the help of both the Joule and the John Rylands libraries, by exchanging redundant resources between these two libraries and overseas libraries.

This Manchester University Press should also build up another network among publishers, both international and local. Books we have published could be distributed to selected publishers to be considered for publication there. Taking several factors into account, we then decide which among these publishers should be given the rights to publish our books. In this way we can earn the copyright fee from other publishers as a percentage of sales while reducing our costs in the publishing and storage of the books.

I am compiling a dictionary of the ASL some extracts of which are the following. I give them here in case you want to do the compilations for me. I shall never mind if you use my systems so long as you do not forget to mention my name.

B̂aâwiunandb̂ziub̂iuwaonact, *n* heaven; *bamaiguwona*, *imit v* swallow; *baomaisaenaodts beicaowact v* take a picture. *baoweibaowuidiunact*, *imit n* door; *bbạono*, *v* leave; *beiguinudt*, *adj* once in a while; *beilactdodact ndtrabbo n* lawyer; *beivewactduidact*, *v* intend. *n* meaning; *b̂hiub̂owact*, *n* night; *b̂hiuĝiuwuni*, *n* day; *blimablemawiadate*, *adj* kind, gentle; *bowuenao*, *v* go; *bubuwactni*, *n* town; *B̂udano*, *n* God; *b̂uenaot* or *~ndtrabbo*, *v n* lecture; *buibinact*, *imit v* exclude; *buibuiwactdiudact*, *n* kitchen. *v* cook, *~ndtrabbo n* cook; *buiyiuwachdact*, *imit n* plane landing; *b̀uiyiuwaonu*, *v* take off; *ckebact*, *panto. n* bed; *ckebawactdadact*, *n v* kiss; *ckebawounactt*, *n* tobacco; *ckeĉeiĉoat*, *n* coconut; *ckecou*, *n* female cousin; *ckefactdadact*, *n* American Indian; *fcasasaweuna*, *adj* pleasant; *fcasasawọ*, *adj* sad; *fcasawaenopus*, *v n* sleep. *adj* sleepy, *~ndtuitiuwact v* sleep soundly; *fcasasaweuna*, *adj* pleasant; cheerful; *fcasasaweunu*, *adj* cheerful; pleasant; *fcasawẹuno*, *adj* dark-coloured; *fcasasawu*, *v* embarrass; *fcasawianaedpus*, *adj* pretty, beautiful; *fcaĺĺo* or *~nact*, *n* tragedy; *feifidenou*, *n* language; *fhexawoedgus*, *v* and *n* understanding; *hhoanactt*, *adj* short (length or time); *hhuenạot*, *v* hurry; *h̀ĥiadact*, *n* universe; *hi* or *~hiuwi*, *n* hell; *h̀imiuhemiuwactdintnut*, *n* build, *~ndbuweibuwideno n* building, *~ndtrabbo n* builder; *hunaowiat*, *v* use; *n* university; *hu*, *adj* high; *huwcaspno*, *v* dress; *huwia*, *n* Thursday; *huwiandbuiwbiuwinact*, *adj* holy; *piweipewoeno*, *v* lose; *piwgewiat*, *adj* approximately; *piwpewachnoet*, *v* correspond; *piwxuenoa*, *v* play cards; *slaslawạsp*, *v* combine; *slaslawaspdideno*, *v* coordinate; *sossseu*, *n* German; Germany; *ŝou*, *adj* so-so; *spagdactt*, *n* dentist; *spahiuwactt*, *n* nurse; *spatiuwuidact*, *n v* lock; *spawiuwactt*, *n* doctor; *tracactdonidact*, *n* Christ; *tracactdt*, *n* policeman. *ṭ̂u*, see *ṭu*; *t̂ue*, bending, kowtow; *tui*, (possessive apostrophe); *tuituiwoenaot*, many, much; *tuituiwoenu*, how many?, how much? ; *ẁiwwewossnactt*, *n* mathematics; *ġiwgewossnactt* geometry; and *xiweixewactt*, *n* electricity; physics; *~ndtrabbo n* electrician.

I hope this is useful. It is a start. Any mistakes, let me know.

—

A beautiful love story is born with a kiss, but it is poetry that makes it everlasting.

anonymous

The Siamese Lāṇnạ

We live on Vijyạnond̀ Road, next to the Vrọros Market and on the opposite side of the Tônlaṃyai Market. This is *Nobḅurị Śrị Nàgaurbingġ Jiangmhăị*, usually known as *Jiangmhăị* or Viangbingġ, now in the northern part of Daiï.

Mangrạï(or Mengrạï, d. 1317) the Great built this city in 1296 as the capital of his kingdom *Lāṇnạ*. He was the son of Meng and had ruled the Hiraññàgaur Ngoenyạng in 1259. He united the *Lāṇnạ* Kingdom, built Jiangrạï in 1262, and in 1278 moved to Fhạng.

For decades the Daiï people called the culture of this area Lạnnạ, which literally means the *plain of paddy-fields*. Later those who knew pointed out to them that it was not *lạn* but *lāṇ*, and so the true name means instead *a million rice-fields*.

The Mangrạï Dynasty reigned in this region for two centuries before it fell into the hands of the Burmese in 1558. After *Tạksin* the Great had driven these away in 1774, the kingdom became Sïam's. During Rama I's reign it was a *pradẹśrạj* (colony), in Rama V's reign it became a *moṇḍol* (prefecture), and in Rama VII a *cangvhaḍ́* (province).

The oldest temple within the city wall, the *vaḍ́* (temple) Jiangmàn, was built in the same year that the city was founded. Also built during his reign is the Umọngġ Temple which is to the west of the city towards the Sudẹb Mountain.

Around 1281 Mangrạï captured *Laṃbụn*, that is Hribhụñjaï, and handed it over to one of his officers, Ậïfā̧, to rule. He then built a town to the northeast, where he remained for two years before building another town near the bank of the Ping River in 1283 and called it *viang* (city) Kumkạm. This town now lies a few kilometres to the southeast of the present city *Jiangmhăị*.

When he built the *Nobḅurị Śrịnàgaurbingġ Jiangmhăị* he consulted it over with Ròang (Rạmgamhạeng) in Sukhọdaï and Ngaṃmuang in Bayao. The building of the town took 4 months to complete.

Lāṇnạ had two dynasties. † The Mengrạï Dynasty comprises Mengrạï who reigned during 1258–1317; Jaïsonggrạm, 1317–1327; Sạenfụ, 1327–1334; Gaṃfụ, 1334–1345; Phạyụ, 1345–1367; Kụenạ, 1367–1388; Sạenmuangmạ, 1388–1411; Sạmfhăngkạen, 1411–1442; Tilọkrạj, 1442–1487; Yaud́jiangrạï, 1487–1495; Muangkàeö, 1495–1525; Muangkẹṣklào, 1525–1538, and 1543–1545; Drạïgaṃ, 1538–1543; Cirprabhạmàhạdẹvị, 1545–1546; Jaiïjẹṣṭhạdhirạj,

† Compare, Aruṇ Vẹjsuvarrṇ. *Bra Rạjjạyạ Cào Ḍạrạraśmị kaḅ kạr roam họamuang bhạg nhụa*. Aruṇ Vidyạ. 2000.

1546–1548; and Mẹkuṭi, 1558. Then the kingdom fell and was ruled by the Burmese until 1774.

Then with the founding of Bạngkauk the Burmese were expelled from the north and the Dibcakr Dynasty was established. It has as kings Kạvila who ruled during 1782–1813; Darrmlankạ, 1813–1821; Gaṃfhân, 1821–1824; Buddhvongśx, 1824–1846; Mảḥọtrpradẹś, 1846–1853; Kạviloros Suriyảvongśx, 1853–1870; Indrảvijyạnond̀, 1870–1896; Indrà Vrọrossuriyảvongśx, 1902–1909; and Kàeö Nảvraṭh, 1909–1939.

Lìam is one of our servants and my nurse. She looks after me. She takes me to the kindergarten where one evening I see a large spider the size of my outspread hand. It lives in the hole underground. I think it is deadly also, but it does not like killing people.

Today it stands here in full view on the ground. It seems to be at lost and walks cautiously about. A crowd gathers and follows it everywhere.

There are also the bees. We call it *phùenglhoang* (*Apis dorsata*). They always build their hive in high places, for example under a branch of the *tòn yoanphùeng* (*Kompassia alaccensis)*, *tòn yạng* (*Dipterocarpus tuberculatus* or *D. alatus*), or underneath the tank that sits on top of the water tower.

The bees are to the farmers like what the royal albatross is to the seamen. They are particularly important in a horticultural farm, since they help carrying the pollen from the stamen to the stigma, thereby making the yields more fruitful.

Other types of bee include *phùeng brọng* (*A. cerana*) and *phùeng mīm* (*A. florea*).

The nectar gathered from the flowers is kept inside the honey bag which is connected to the oesophagus, and then metabolised by an enzyme in the bee's stomach. The glucose and fructose are changed into inverted sugars, that is the levulose and dextrose. This happens in the air while the bee is on its way back to the hive.

Bees are also bred in movable-comb hive where there are slots into which you insert the frames containing the artificial honeycombs. You can rear the *phùeng brọng* or *phùeng bandhu* (*A. mellifera*), not Phùeng Lhoang, which is wild.

The best thing to do when collecting the hive of wild bee is to only drive away using smoke the bees from the end of the hive which has the honey. The usual practice of burning the whole hive is horrendous and will soon put the future of the species in jeopardy. I cannot imagine the world without these bee-hives. It probably would look too city-like, less a place to live and die in.

I always have trouble when I wake up, of finding where I am and how I come to be sleeping there. I often go to bed with my head towards one direction only to wake up and find that it points towards another, and not the least

often the opposite one.

Nothing is like sleeping when you are young. You become oblivion for ten hours and need to reconcile with yourself upon coming to.

And there is never a lack of dreams, and these dreams are more adventurous and memorable than your waking life. The trouble is, who knows why you always forget them. Sometimes I wake up and miss my dream so badly that I try to get back to sleep again to be in it again. Usually this is possible if you are quick enough, but sometimes these latter part of the dream is half a dream and half an imagination because you are half awake and half asleep. At times the dream and the self seem almost inseparable the one from the other, were it not for the element of absurdities normally found only in the case of the former.

There are on average around 56 students in each class at the primary school. I never study but always find myself among the first five of my class in my study. Then I begin to study more decently, but still manage only second or third.

By contrast, *Ṣẹm* always comes first, not only among his classmates but also in all the classes. Sadly he is not doing this well in the secondary school and university's levels. It could be that our childhood self moves from the conscious into the subconscious realm of our brain, as a consequence of which we become a different person from the child. I would rather not think that there is anything amiss in our educational system.

Whenever I need to make a decision my father always tells me to think for myself. 'Gûeḍ ao ẹ̀ǹg', that is *think for yourself* he would say.

Sometimes I silently disapprove with this saying of his. 'Well, tell me what I should do,' I would think, 'What do you expect me to make up my own mind? I am only a child!'

But I never say this out loud of course. Freedom is something you never decline. Anyway when you are of my age your life seems to stretch infinitely before you, as though you shall never die let alone grow old.

All lives are tragedy, no matter whether we think of them individually or collectively, for instance when we consider a person, a society or culture. It is only if you think in terms of the whole universe that it begins to become comprehensible and even harmonious.

The first classical music I listen to is Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 (1808) in C minor. One day I went to a record shop on our street and asked the owner to suggest some classical music for me to listen to. He recorded the said song together with Schubert's Unfinished Symphony on to a tape cassette which I brought back and listen to.

Listening to the Fifth Symphony I imagine the knocking on the door announcing the onset of deafness. Then comes the violin passage which rushes

around, trying to escape from the hands of Fate, then the pastoral stroll in nature after which a conciliation becomes possible when he accepts and joins hands with faith.

With Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) the Romantic movement in music began. He also lifts the status of a composer from being a mere servant to aristocrats and audiences to that of a creating philosopher, author and artist. At one party of aristocrats one among the audiences did not keep his silence and behave, so he stopped playing and said, 'I do not play for such swine'. I have been searching for some time what it is he actually said in German.

He influences numerous later composers, for example Ferencz Liszt (1811–1886) and Wagner.

It is true, at least in the case of Franz Peter Schubert (1797–1828), that those who gods love die young. He lived to be thirty-one but has given the world an amazing amount of repertoire than one could dare imagine possible. With his *Lieder* (songs) he single-handedly starts off the long chain of songs which, though become less fervent now, could never possibly die. Example of composers who carry on this song tradition are Johannes Brahms (1833–1897), Claude Debussy (1862–1918), Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924), Edvard Grieg (1843–1907), Gustav Mahler (1860–1911), Robert Schumann (1810–1856) and Hugo Wolf (1860–1903).

There is another Franz Schubert (1808–1878), a violinist who is generally mentioned only in order not to confuse him for his namesake. Even his *L'Abeille* (the bee) is now thought to be written by the other Schubert.

We move into our new house in Santidharrm, and from here everyday commute to our shop in town. The new place is outside the town and in a rather deserted area. There are only three identical houses in the whole area, surrounded by *maiïṛaḅ* (*Mimosa pudica*). This must be the best weed in the world, for it is so tough and aggressive, and it has hideous thorns.

Despite the marsh which surrounds us on all sides, the ground of our house is dry like a desert and the house looks puny, the parquet on the floor artificial, and the outward appearance totally void of characters.

Within months after we move in my father changes all this. First he has the front balcony extended to make a decent garage underneath. Then he has the whole place repainted. The fences need to go up and the bars are fitted into every door and window. We need these latter later several times. He also gets himself a gun, and we would need this too.

If a thief comes to our house, my father would fire the thing up to the sky. If he comes in front, he will do this from the back of the house in order not to risk having to shoot or exchange fire with him in case he should have a gun. Normally the thief would know then that it is time to leave. I used to imagine myself shooting with a thief like a cowboy.

A year or two later the YMCA moves to the plot of land behind us. Their high buildings soon deprives us the view of the Sudẹb mountain. Then they put the car park behind us. But with them we feel more secure, and people come and build their houses all around here.

My favourite singer is John Denver, and my favourite song his *Country Road*.

The books I like are the light novel series known as the *Bol, Nikaur, Kimnghoan* from the names of the characters in them who are friends, whose life together is at the same time adventurous, fun, funny and peaceful. They are written by P Indpạlit. These are in a way similar to the *Harry Potter* that we have now, but I still prefer the former even now because they have more to say.

When I have exhausted all the books in the *Bol, Nikaur, Kimnghoan* series, I turn to reading the *kaṃlangbhạïnaị* †

These books are originally written in Taiwan. There are two famous translators who translate them into Daiï, namely *N Nobratṅ* and *V ṇà Muanglung*, both names of which are a pseudonym. These novels are to a culture like our dreams to us.

Taiwan's Chinese had fought and lost the battles with the communists in the mainland China. Mentally they need to win and to vent their grief of the lost paradise through their works in the form of the world which they create in such a way that it upholds all the social values that they feel no longer exist in their beloved homeland.

Between the two translators mentioned I prefer NN to VM because the latter like to translate the more philosophical works, for example those by *Kọ̄ölẹ̄ng* which bore me at best and puzzle me otherwise.

I like those stories that NN translates where our protagonist is a boy of twelve whose family has perished by the hands of some powerful, hideous people. He somehow gets into a jungle and in a seemingly bottomless gorge. Here he meets a hermit who takes pity on him and teaches him the way of the force.

At sixteen he says goodbye to his teacher to go after his family business and to save the world. With the force he has with him the superhuman ability whereby, for example, jumping three times without much effort he reaches the top of a mountain and so on.

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† Literally, 'internal power', that mythical and mystic power in our body and in nature that we can tap, harness and use. The idea has been used in the film Star Wars when, for example, Luke Skywalker's Jedi teacher lifts the spaceship from a bog, neither touching it nor with a crane, and in the Jedi's definition of *force* in general.

O, my power of imagination is never again to be like what it is now when I am a child and reading the *Bol, Nikaur, Kimnghoan* and *Kaṃlangbhạ̈naị*. I look at the cloud formation in the sky and see all sorts of thing there. When I read, the story becomes so vivid in my imagination that I often cannot put the book down, but keep reading on all night. As the result of this my eyesight quickly deteriorates.

At the moment no other leading actors command a higher regard than Alain Delon (b. 1935). As for Daiï actors, *Mitr Jaïḅañja* falls off the helicopter and dies while acting for a film which becomes his last. *Somḅati Mẹdinị* is unassailable both as an actor and in all the films that he appears. *Saurbongǧ Jạtrị*, who is to become his successor in this respect, is yet to appear on the scene.

Daiï films faithfully follow the attitude and style of the Hollywood, and the main instrument and mean are shooting with mafias on the farms. I find books infinitely better than films. Those written by *P Indpạlit* are witty and amusing without being vulgar while those which *N Nobratṅ* translates give an endless source for the imagination.

I become interested in Astronomy and talk about it at school until Lhim and Siddhi, too, become interested in it. I read books on the subject and that of Cosmology in the library at the Jiangmhăị University, and I build my first telescope. It is only a refractive one, but I want also to grind my own mirror to make a reflector. I buy a convex lens from an optician who does not know its focal length, which I find by using it to gather the sunlight into a point on the ground to be three-quarters of a metre.

At home, *Dạ* helps me cut a plastic tube to the required length. The rings placed inside the telescope to keep the lens in its place are also made from plastic tubes. The distance from the objective lens to the eyepiece is approximately the focal length of the former. But the main body of the telescope is a little shorter than this to allow for the tube for the eyepiece.

Inside the telescope tube there are three light-stops made by cutting a circular hole in a piece of paper. The diameters of the holes are from the first stop $1\,3/8''$, $2''$and $2\,5/8''$respectively. The second stop is the main stop, and is placed in the middle of the tube.

You can also put a concave lens between your objective and eyepiece. I try this in my second telescope, but I prefer my first one better. To do this, you place at the distance α before the focal point of the objective the concave lens of focal length f. The new point of focus of the combination will be β where $\beta > \alpha$. Depending on what one has to begin with, then, $\beta = (m-1)f = (f\alpha)/(f-\alpha) = m\alpha$, $\alpha = \beta/m = f - f/m = f\beta/(f+\beta)$, $m = \beta/\alpha = f/(f-\alpha) = (\beta+f)/f$ and $f = m\alpha/(m-1) = \beta/(m-1) = \alpha\beta/(\beta-\alpha)$.

There are several types of eyepiece. The simple and most popular home-

made one is called the symmetrical type, Kellner type 3 or Plössl. It is made by placing two identical plano-convex lenses symmetrically beside each other, such that their convex part are closest to each other.

Other types include both *ordinary* and corrected eyepieces, for example aspheric, Bertele, Erfle, Hastings, Huygens, Kellner, Mittenzwey-Abbe orthoscopic, orthoscope, Plössl, Ramsden, Steinheil and Tolles, some of which are divided into subtypes. Achromatic lenses can be used to correct the colours.

In both the Huygens and the Ramsden there are two plano-convex lenses. The only difference is that in the former these two lenses face towards the same direction, whereas in the latter they face each other. The lens closest to the eye is called the eye lens while the other one the field lens.

The Huygens eyepiece has good definition, especially at the centre, and is fully corrected for lateral colours. Apart from the lateral colour, the Ramsden eyepiece is better corrected than Huygens in all respect. Two of the variations in Huygens are the Huygens design, 4–3–2, and the Dolland, designated 3–2–1, the number showing the relative magnitude of respectively the field lens' focal length, the lens separation, and the eyes lens' focal length. The resulting focal length is then 8/3 and respectively 3/2.

The Stonehenge (Old English for *hanging stones*) is on the Salisbury Plain, 1.9 miles west of Amesbury in Wiltshire, England. It began as an earthwork circle and ditch around 3000 BC, and later developed into a complex stone structure around 2100 BC.

Thirty upright sand stones with lintel stones on top formed a circle of approximately 100 feet in diameter. Within the sarsen peristyle were five more sarsen trilithons arranged in a horseshoe shape. A trilithon is two upright stones supporting a lintel stone on top.

The sandstone used for making these sarsens is local. Other circles, all concentric to one another, are bluestone relocated from the previous outer circles and were transported from the Prescelly Mountains, Pembrokeshire, Wales. Each of the uprights measures 18 by 7 feet and weigh some 26 tonnes.

Both this horseshoe and the opening of the ditch circle which encompasses the outermost sarsen circle open towards the direction of the midsummer sunrise. Continue this line further in the opposite direction and you have the midwinter sunset.

Nowhere in the universe can a harmony be more beautifully visualised than in binary stars. In a binary systems two stars revolve around their mutual centre of gravity. The two stars and their CG form a straight line at all time, but the length of this line and the distance from each of the stars to the CG periodically change.

Both stars reach their maximum separation when they exhaust their mutual momentum, approach each other until the minimum separation is reached

where the orbital velocity of both is greatest and therefore the momentum, and then swing further apart like a coiled spring released until their momentum is exhausted again and so on. Because of their lateral velocity, the two stars run towards each other periodically but never collide.

It may be otherwise for men, but in science one simply value special cases less than one does general ones. A special case is only a curiosity while a general one can form a theory. From Einstein's Special Relativity and according to a stationary observer, the time increases exponentially with speed towards infinity, and so does the mass. The length, however, decreases according to the Fitzgerald contraction until it becomes zero at the velocity $v = c$.

This c is the speed of light and is never exceeded. Imagine two spaceships move away from the earth in directions opposite to each other at 95 per cent the speed of light. The speed of each spaceship as appear to the other will be 99.9 per cent the light's speed.

All massive bodies deflect photons, but it only becomes obvious when their mass is great and concentrated. A black hole is by definition that body, or to be precise the collapsed body, which not only deflects but captures the photon.

If we concentrated a mass into a single point and imagine ourselves moving towards it, then at a point just inside the *photon sphere* all rays of light in the horizontal direction will go round and round the mass in circle, unable to escape. Between this photon sphere and the *event horizon* the light ray which goes directly away from the star and all the rays within the cone around it will escape while the rest is pulled towards the mass and thereby captured. This cone becomes more and more tapered until at the point just above the event horizon when it is reduced into a single line, when no light escapes unless it goes directly away from the mass.

In stars these event horizon and photon sphere normally lie within the surface and therefore pose no problems for an observer. At the extreme condition when they shrink under their own gravity until their radius lies within either one of these spheres, however, this will cease to be the case.

This singularity, the event horizon and the photon sphere make up what we call a Schwarzschild black hole.

Karl Schwarzschild calculated in 1916 the critical radius of an object below which nothing, not even light, may escape. This Schwarzschild radius is $r_s = 2Gm/c^2$, and for someone who weighs 60 kg is a little less than 8.9×10^{-26} metre.

It is known since 1795 when the French mathematician Pierre Simon Laplace (1749–1827) calculated that light will not be able to escape a mass which is massive enough or a collapsed body. Others say that John Mitchell in 1783 said a similar thing before Laplace did. But it was only in 1960 that astronomers had their attention drawn to black holes.

The photon sphere or photon circle is the trajectory where photons that enter the black hole at a certain angle remain and neither fall into the black hole nor escape. It is the trajectories of light in space the way the limit cycle the trajectory of states in the state space.

Physicists believed that light propagates through a medium, the ether, until the experiment made by Michelson and Morley in 1887.

A light source is split by the beam splitter into two paths perpendicular to each other. These paths reflect at a mirror and come together again in a telescope where interference fringes are detected. The velocity of light travelling in the same direction as the ether should have changed and become prominent when the instrument is rotated by 90°. The same is always true with swimmers. The swimmer who swims across the current and come back always win the other one who swims the same distance along the current first and then come back against it.

This is easily shown if we let the velocity of the current be v and the speed of the swimmer u. Here necessarily $u > v > 0$ for otherwise the swimmer shall never be able to swim against the current. Let the distance swum by both in each direction be x. Then the time taken by the first swimmer becomes $2x/u$ whereas that taken by the second $x/(u+v) + x/(u-v)$ which simplifies to $2ux/(u^2 - v^2)$.

But $u - v^2/u$ is always less than u for $v > 0$, which means that the first swimmer wins provided that he is not normally slower than the second one by at least v^2/u where u is now the speed of the second swimmer.

When their experiment showed no significant fringes shift the ether suddenly found no roles to play and was soon abandoned as being irrelevant before Einstein developed his special relativity theory in 1905. According to his theory, the speed of light is independent of the velocity of the source.

In Electrodynamic, the local observer sees only the electric field produced by the electric charge while another observer who moves relative to him sees both the electric current and the magnetic field.

Experiments to test his special relativity theory use instruments like the betatron, cyclotron, and synchrotron to mention but a few.

Imagine that you are in a very fast spaceship with windows on the front, side and rear. As the speed of your vehicle approaches 90 per cent the speed of light, the view through the front window appears like what you see looking at the universe through a fish-eye lens.

When you look through the back window, it seems like you are looking through a powerful telescope, not resolutionwise but that you see fewer stars. Through the side window look and 'Lo and behold!', what used to be the vertical line in the middle of the window is now a small circular arc attached to the side of the window towards the direction in which the spaceship is

travelling, with half of the stars in it.

If your spaceship moves away from the sun at the speed of light, you will even see the sun in your front window. These results were predictions based on the calculations by G D Scott and H J van Driel.

In the Doppler Effect the light from an approaching source is blue-shifted because the wavelength decreases, whereas the light from a receding source red-shifted because the wavelength increases. This effect was first discovered by Christian Doppler (1803–1853) for the sound waves. The cone of the blue-shift is 149°at the speed of 50 per cent of c. At 90 per cent c this cone becomes 102°and at 99 1/2 per cent 50°.

To an observer on earth the outer planets sometimes appear to be moving backwards across the sky, retracing its steps for a while before resuming its journey. This is the retrograde movement, and occurs because both the observer and the observed planet moves. The observer is on the inner planet which moves faster, and therefore for the relative motion we can imagine the position of the outer planet to be fixed.

Then the effect may be visualised by analogy with a piston assembly as an observer who is on the crank looking at the piston along the connecting rod as his line of sight. Here the sun is at the crankshaft.

The Newton's law of gravitation states that the force which acts between two bodies is Gm_1m_2/r^2 where m_1 and m_2 are the mass of the bodies, r the separation between them and G the gravitational constant. We can see that this is a nonlinear equation with regard to the force and the distance, that is to say, the force greatly increases with the decreasing distance.

The weight of our body is not the mass but the force in the term of Newton's law. It therefore changes depending on how far away from the centre of the earth we are. If you weigh 60 kg, assuming that the radius of the earth is 4,000 miles, then at 4,000 miles above the surface of the earth you weigh only 15 kg.

Two thousand miles below the earth's surface, however, you weigh less at 30 kg. This is because now only the mass of that part of the globe which lies below your feet interacts with your body.

In other words, in a homogeneous body only that mass of the sphere which is centred around the centre of gravity of the body and has the radius equal to the separation between the two CG's, interacts with the CG of that other body. Were the earth shaped like a cube the length of the side of which is d, and if you stood in the middle of one of its face, then only the mass of volume $(3/4)\pi(d/2)^3$ would have acted on your body.

I go around using either the Vespa scooter or the sport bicycle. I often come here to the library. The books on astronomy are on the top and third floor where there are very few people and the air-conditioning becomes rather

cold late into the night. There are tables with partitions and a reading lamp. You need to turn on the lamp to be able to read, the library is too dimly lit.

Often in some of these tables there are man and woman doing things only they would know. Today, apart from the table where I sit there are only two other tables with the light on. One of them faces the wall, leaving a gap behind where you can walk between the table and the shelves. The partition can only hide the occupants of the table from someone down the passage. But when you walks pass behind it everything comes into view. When I arrived here two hours earlier, I passed behind the table while looking for some nice corner to sit. The man's hand was in the girl's blouse, but she was passive and not protesting. I tried not to notice and passed them by as quietly and quickly as possible. Both of them are students.

The other table where there is light is in the very far end of the floor. The corner is so far away and the floor so quiet that I would never dream of walking there at this hour, let alone to sit and read. Yes I am young, and when you are my age you fear ghosts. I never find out what they are up to there. Anyhow, my business is astronomy.

I never cease to wonder, whenever I look up at the stars in the sky, how vast the universe is and how tiny we all are. Just imagine that the light goes around the world seven and a half times in one second, and yet it takes more than 4.2 years for the light to go from here to the closest star to the sun, the Alpha Centauri.

Among the billions of galaxies or twin spiral galaxy, the Andromeda which is in our Local Cluster, is 2.22 million light-years away. This galaxy is in the Pegasus constellation and is also known as M31 or NGC224. The first number is according to the catalogue compiled by Charles Messier (1730–1817) in 1784 which contains 103 galactic and extragalactic nebulae. He also discovered 16 comets and observed 41. The Pegasus also contains M32 and M33.

In 1781 William Herschel (1738–1822) discovered Uranus. By 1840 astronomers have found that the orbit of the planet does not agree with the calculated path.

Do I need to tell you never to believe anyone including myself? As everything else a person may change, his idea, his believe and all. This is important since we are not a robot. Buddha is the first instance in history of the enlightenment. His teaching is timeless, though you may find it only in the canon which is not written by himself but somebody else, and which includes all the other worldly parts and cares.

At the core of his teaching is that recorded as the Kạlạmsụtr, which is in the Dutiyàpaṇṇạsk within the Tikaniḅạt of the Anggutrnikạï. It tells you never to believe something because of the following ten reasons. These are namely *mā anussaven*, that is to say, never believe only because it is well-accepted; *mā paramprāya*, nor because it follows as a consequence of something; *mā*

itikirāya, neither if it is according to what I have heard; *mā piṭakasampadānen*, nor because it is written in a bible or canon; *mā nayahētu*, never for it stands up to methodologies; *mā takkahetu*, nor because it stands up to reasons; *mā ākāraparivitakken*, neither because you have reflected and pondered; *mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā*, nor since it follows from, is against, or because of the opinion to which you adhere; *mā bhabbarūpatāya*, never for it is becoming or attractive; and lastly *mā samaṇō nō garu*, because of neither priests nor gurus.

I am learning Daiï weapons at the *Śrị Ȧyudhyạ* sword school. My teacher is *Pīak* who also teaches Chemistry. First there is the *khùen grụ* (student-accepting). For this we need a candle, flowers, incense and the smallest amount of money, which in this case is the 25 stạng coin. We sit on the floor while the teacher on a chair. One by one he tells us never to use what we are about to learn here to do wrongs to others. By this I guess that he means those things that are morally wrong, which our conscience alone can tell us.

First we learn how to stand with our legs wide apart and the thighs parallel to the ground. Then we walk with long strides each of which makes 45 degrees to the direction we face, always remember to keep our low position.

We learn how to hold the two swords, one in each hand, such that to make the shape of an upright regular triangle that guards our body when looking from the front. Our whole body itself, from the feet up, resembles another upright equilateral triangle.

Then we learn the *mậe māi* (base formula) which comprises *gạu* (necks), *khạ* (legs), *ẹō* (waists), *họa* (heads) and *dạeng* (pierces). Complementary to these are the moves to receive these where invariably the right hand receives the blow made by a right hand, and so on. This is called *raḅ naị* in general.

Then there is the *māi sạm* (third formula) where there are necks, head, (dodge, change) *gạu gù* (double-neck's or d-neck's), *họa gù* (double-head or d-head) and *ngaď gù* (double-surge or d-surge), where 'change' (*plĭan*) means changing from hitting to barring and vice versa.

There is no *māi hà* (fifth formula) as such, but a hypothetical one may contain necks, legs (both received with the same hand), waist (out-bar), (change) gạu, (dodge, change) d-neck's, d-head and d-surge. Here 'out-bar' is receiving the hit by a right hand with your left hand and vice versa, that is *raḅ nauk*, the opposite to *raḅ naị* already mentioned. Dodging (*saud́*) moves your body out of the line and direction of attack, ideally such that you find yourself behind the coming weapon and its wielder.

Next is the *māi ceď* (seventh formula) with its necks, legs, waists, head, (change) d-neck's, d-head and d-surge. *Māi kào* (ninth formula) is probably the easiest to do but the most wild. It starts with a neck, then four cascade-neck's (*gạu tạmkan*), (dodge, change) d-neck's, d-head and d-surge.

We learn *goang blaung* (pole spinning), where the pole is a little longer than our height. The moves are namely *khặeng sạeng sụrỵa* (sun-racing), *biruṇ rāunghài* (crying rain), *Nạrạiïṇ sĩ kaur* (four-handed Narayana), *phlạeng śaur khậm khao* (shooting an arrow over the mountain), *hak ngoang aiïrạ* (cutting elephant's trunk, half-head), *tem họa* (full-head), *thẹr kvạd́ lạn* (old man sweeping the floor), and *ban ẹ̈ö* (waist-wrap).

The most important thing in traditional Daiï weaponry is the *dậ raṃ* (dancing style). It is what sets us apart from other kinds of martial art. It also represents what our school means to us in terms of *grụ* (teacher) and *śiṣỵa* (student). Teachers are like parents.

The *kaṃlang bhạïnaị* (hidden force) that I used to read are riddled with Chinese proverbs. Many of these are good, for example there is a popular one that says, 'Being a teacher for one day is like being the father for the rest of your life'. Not all teachers are selfless, however, even in the area of sword fighting.

Grauḅ means becoming accepted as a teacher. For this we have to be tested. We do not have this test every year, only about once in five years in general. Depending on who became a teacher before whom, we have *bị̀* (elder member) and *nậung* (younger member). These are prefixes which have become our second nature, while *vhài* is how you put the palm of your hands together and position it in such away that your index fingers are between you brows, no thumbs stick out, and your upper arms are braced close to your body.

Those who are together with me are namely Ấem, Art, Bẹ̄, Cŭn, Ḍạeng, Dẹ̄ng, Jaiïvaḍhṅ̀, Kùng, Lhim, Mị̀, Mụ, San, Siddhi, Tậum and *Tọ*. Before us are Am (Ạem), Gīang, Lệ̀h ('Ley, *i.e.* Byeley, I think), Nạng, Nok, Pop (Pāuḅ), *Vậe*, and Yuddh.

Before these are our teacher *Pīak* and together with him Ḍạeng, Mnas and *Páung* who is in *Laṃbụn*. There was also Lauï whom I have never met, for he had already died.

Before these is *Ạrị̀ỵa* who founded the *saṃnak ḍạḅ* (sword school) *Śrị̀ Ȧyudhyạ*, and before him Lạ and Lị̀. And here the trail ends, for we keep no records. *Ạrị̀ỵa* died in Lī when he was 51. Before *Śrị̀ Ȧyudhyạ* there was the *Buddhaiïsvarrġ* which he had founded together with Smaï. They went their separate ways because Smaï would turn the teaching of this into a business whereas *Ạrị̀ỵa* would have none of it.

There are two rooms which belong to the club. One serves as the main office, armoury as well as a conference room, the other a room for practising. Each room was once an old class-room and has a large black-board, two doors on one side and a row of windows on the other. The wooden bar on top of the door frame of the rear door of the first room has a metal loop where you can hang a punch bag filled with saw-dust with an aid of a hook.

The windows opened on to the roof of the bicycle garage. One can easily climb over the sills of windows on to the roof. The roof slightly slopes outward and runs the whole length of the building which must be no less than fifty metres in total. It seems to beckon at you, inviting you to climb out to walk on it. But the tiles were thin and not holding, you must always keep to the places where it rested on a beam if you walked on it.

Today I had been out there with some friends of mine scaling the roof I misplaced my foot and the tiles beneath suddenly gave way. I could still remember the feeling when I fell down through the hole caused by my own weight. Fortunately both my arms caught hold of the tiles on either sides of my body and those ones did not give way so I was hanging at breast-level with my bust above the roof and the rest of my body dangling in the air down from the ceiling of the bicycle room. It was after five o'clock in the evening and many students were in there. Looking down I could see their faces as they looked up to what happening above their heads. It must have been a sight to see for all I know. I got bruises and cuts but amazingly these do not hurt me at all. It must have been the shock of my first experience of falling through a roof that kept all the pains away.

I feel rather shaken-up now as I think back to what happened and realise that I could easily have broken my legs, or for that matter my neck. As I laugh away with my friends I feel grateful that I had escaped intact, and secretly promise myself that never again will I walk on that roof.

The roof is never my favourite spot anyway. I prefer spending my time on the corridor in front of the room with a pair of rattan sticks, each one of which is about one metre long, in my hands practising.

We practise in pairs which alternated between attacking and defending. We normally practise formulas, that is set sets of attacks and defences done by two back and forth and back again, and so on, for as long as one like. These are very useful. They give us the precision and timing necessary in performances which are the main activity of our club.

One example of such formulas is the one I have already mentioned above, which goes neck, neck, leg, leg, waist, waist, head, head, stab, stab by one party and then return with exactly the same sequence of attacks made by the other party. Another one begins with neck, neck, head, then the other party dodges the head and returns with double-neck, double-neck, double-head, double-surge, and then he may begin again right from the beginning of the formula and thus carrying on the sequences as before but with opposite roles for each party.

These sequences almost always alternate between left and right, and thus this is left unsaid. Therefore the neck, neck means an attack to the neck position on the left-hand side of the attacker followed by one to that on the right-hand side, and so forth.

The prefix *double-* means essentially that both swords to attack together on the same position of the same side. The blow thus made is that where both swords strike together in parallel.

A surge was my own word coined up to represent a *ngaḱ* in Daïï. It is done by a prompt outward circular movement of the swords in both hands in such a way that the blades are brought up in a curve towards the opposite party from below.

Other schools may have the another thing that looks similar to a surge as well as a leg. It is done by a circular movement of only one sword which in the beginning looks as though it aimed at the leg, but then curves up towards the rib. This is called a *yāun kleḱ* and I will call it here as a *rip*. Such a blow is very difficult to ward off since it is not direct. I consider it a dangerous thing to do, especially when you mock-fight with your friend for a performance. So we use nothing like it at our school.

Páung's school in *Laṃbụn*, however, is expert in this. And they also fly in circular motion like a disc spinning horizontally, with their body parallel to the ground, to escape from blows in the legs. Taiwanese films always do the same thing, and these may come from them.

However, neither does this become us. So we never try it. What I believed was that the reason why my school did not use such blow as a I doubt that the rip-blow is old. It looks different, not as straightforward as all those that we do.

All the blows made in the line of fighting of the *saṃnakḱaḅ* Sri Ayudhya of *grụ* (guru) *Ạrịỵa*, even though they always comes from a circular movement to gather the momentum, always land with the blade straight on to the target. Every cut thus made resembles a straight cut, contrasted with the sliced cut as carved up by a rip.

There are two ways to perform or practise with your friend safely using the real swords. One is to stop the blades just short of the other, that is in this case the momentum is stopped. The other is to keep the momentum going in a circular motion, thus the blades only raked past each other causing ample sparks flying as they pass and touch each other in full speed. I always use both of these methods in combination. By keeping most of the momentum in a circle you often get plenty of sparks which are caused by the two jagged blades that glide past each other at high speed.

Sometimes you let the swords stray from their circles, and thereby produce a realistic scene. Only you had to be doubly careful to make sure that you can stop the sword at any time you want, so that no accidents result. But accidents do happen, at least to me they do all the time. I am perhaps the only one among us who seems to get a fresh wound or two from every performance.

As for the doubled attacks, one can either dodge such blows, ward them

off by leading them to other directions or double-fend oneself, which means to fend oneself with the two swords in parallel thus receiving a blow made by two swords with two swords.

Yet another one of such formulas is that which goes neck, leg, waist, neck, leg, waist, head, stab, stab, head, here the first right to the neck is followed by the first left leg.

The triangular stepping is to be practised for at least a month before everything else starts. Your subconscious mind never forgets it after that. It is at the very foundation of all the Daiï martial arts, including *Moaï Daiï*, and is known as the *yạ̀ng sạmkhum*. Essentially it means keeping guard when you walk about while fighting, always keeping your feet aligned in a line approximately 45 degree to the imaginary line connecting your opponent and yourself.

The foot-work is the most important thing in all sword-fightings. A strong foot-work results from keeping your feet wide apart and your body low. Your two feet should form with your head a firm, equilateral triangle. You can even draw lines connecting them together as the vertices of it. And you must keep your body in the upright position.

Then imagine your legs as the arms of a compass in geometry and draw a circular arc first using your left, and then another one using your right leg. You have, then, two points on the ground where these two arcs intersect each other. These become the only two places possible for your next footing. Your fighting becomes nothing but the flowing series of footings which has become naught but for the sequence of these points on the ground.

Both feet are kept at about one metre distance from each other. The practice is at first done without the rattan sticks, and later with two of these one in each hand. The sticks are straight, one inch and a quarter in diameter, and one metre long.

The on-guard position means keeping the sticks, which were called rattan swords or *dạ́b vhạ̄ï* in Daiï, in an upright triangular position in front of you. Your upper arms are kept reasonably close to your body while the lower arms extend comfortably outwards in front of you.

The first month is spent walking without the two rattan sticks, the second with them kept at all times in the guarding position, and the third while practising the attacks to the neck when advancing, and when retreating the receiving blows to the necks as such. Three or four of us stand in a row running the width of the practice-room, go together forwards and then backwards, always in long steps. We practise everyday, with no exceptions even for Saturdays and Sundays. Daiï swords become a part of our lives.

The planks that make up the floor are splintered in places. Sometimes the small pieces of wood broken off them, or the protruding nails, would catch our feet while we are practising. The only way such wounds are dressed is with

the dark, rust-red tincture-iodine solution. The wounds caused by splintered wood are somewhat harder to treat than those caused by nails as there always are small pieces of wood stuck under the skin that have to be taken care of first.

More often than not, in our taking away the splintered wood the wound would widen up sufficiently to make it easier for the strong tincture-iodine solution to react with it. Some believe that the solution was not the best way of treating a fresh wound because it kills tissues. But for us it reduces the chance of getting the pus as well as prevents an infection.

I remember when I was younger, during my first or second year in the junior high school, I once had a small opening in the skin of the lower part of my left leg which developed into a large wound filled with pus.

After a while it began to stink and worsen all the while disregarding what I did with it. I was so afraid for fear that my leg would have to be cut off. For months the ordeal went on. As the last resort I think that I took some antibiotics and afterwards the pus started to go away. I remembered vaguely that I used to scrape the wound clean of pus by myself, and then applied some tincture-iodine solution on it. But I cannot remember whether that made it better or worse.

In the performances I wield not two swords but a sword and a *ḱàng*, which is a shield with a rectangular shape, made of thick dried leather and held in the left hand. Its use in combination with the *ḱạḅ* (sword) is simply called the *ḱạḅ ḱàng*.

Before each fight there is always the ritualistic, slow movements with the weapon that are made solemnly in the presence of the other combatant. These dances always start from a *bromh sĭnhạ̀* (four-faced Brahmā) which goes in four directions at right angle to each other. The purpose of doing it was to pay a homage to that Hindu god and the creator of all things, which has in the human form four hands and four faces.

With the strong influence of Hinduism, and with it the Sanskrit language, *Ȧyudhyạ* became a powerful empire. The Lā̱nnạ empire in the north, on the other hand, was more influenced by the Buddhism from Śrị Langkạ, which is reflected in the influence of the Pali language.

Hinduism has three major divinities, and Brahmā is one of them. Then there is Viṣnu who is the protector and maintainer of the world. For all the engineers in Daiï he is the god to be respected in their profession. Then the last one to be mentioned is Śiva who is the god of destruction.

It is interesting to note how it is Viṣṇu not Brahmā who is considered by Daiïs as the god of Engineerings. In the light of this, Brahmā creates all things while engineers merely maintain them.

There were two kinds of the Bromh Sĭnhà, one of which is done in the

standing postures while the other in the sitting ones. They are respectively called *bromh yụen* and *bromh nàng*. In both of these, one steps as though one is following the four sides of an invisible square on the ground, that is to say, forwards and then three times consecutively rightwards. In the end you come back to the position from where you started. One goes on one's feet in the Bromh Yụen and on both knees and feet in the Bromh Nàng.

After the BSN comes a series of slow dances or *raṃ* which are essentially slow movements abstracted from or summarising the actual movements done in the fighting. The spiritual purpose of this is to pay homage to one's line of teachers while the practical purpose is to warm up and prepare oneself for the fight, as well as to allow the combatants the inspection of the ground, which is important in planning the way they fight. It also lets one know whether there are any pitfalls in the ground so that he may avoid them during the combat or performance.

The Raṃs vary from weapon to weapon. For instance, those of the two-handed swords differ from those of the Daiï sabre or *kraḅĭ*, a slender sabre that is held in one hand. Together with the Ngą̄ö it is held with the highest regard among all the other kinds of the Daiï weapons.

A *ngą̄o* (or *ngą̄ö*) is a sword attached to a very long handle used by kings when they fight with each other sitting on top of their elephants. Thus in practice they all have a hook just below the blade for turning the living vehicle. With its long wooden handle it looked more like a harpoon than a sword. Both the *kraḅĭ* and the *ngą̄ö* are considered to be the weapon of the king. Therefore they command the ruling position above all the rest. In my *ḍ́aḅdàng* practice I use the slow dances of the *kraḅĭ*.

Among the various combinations performed using the Daiï weapons neither a real kraḅĭ nor a real ngą̄w is ever used. They are seldom performed as a fight even with the rattan canes in place of a real blades. Essentially they are only performed as parts of the ritualistic dances before all the performances.

From its nature, the *ngą̄ö* is a particularly difficult weapon to yield on the ground. I conjecture that a king almost never was on the ground in wars. And even if he did, I think he would have chosen to wield the *ḍ́aḅ*s instead of a *kraḅĭ*.

Neither was he likely to have such great needs for the *ngą̄ö* either while sitting on his elephant, because each foot of the marsupial is guarded at all times by a foot-soldier who would have to die before anybody could get to firstly the elephant and then the *rex*.

Even if he did die, another would resume his post in no times. The single-handed sword is used more like a *kraḅĭ* than a sword.

We never have elephants at our *saṃnak* (school), so I have seldom seen a *ngą̄ö* bout performed. But perhaps Ą́em and Mị̀ do it together sometimes with the rattan weapons.

We go together during one winter to perform at the *ngạn ṛuedụ́nhạ̈ö* (winter festival) in *Jiangmhăị*. This town sits in the northern part of Daiï where it is mountainous, so the weather here is cooler than in most other parts of the country.

Winters here used to be much colder in the past, when there were still plenty of forests that is. I can remember a day when I was a small child sitting in a saloon-car while my father drove the Hillman to send us to our school. As we passed our shop near the market downtown to drop off my mother and the two servants, we saw a long line of people in front of the shop waiting to buy things.

My father had then a business selling wool and winter clothes made from woolen products. Normally mother would open the shop with the servants while father send us to school. He would be back to the shop fifteen minutes later.

That morning, however, he decided that there were too many prospective customers waiting there than the three of them could handle, so we drove past in front our own shop to the schools first as if we were not there. The fog on the streets was very thick.

The Winter Festival is held each year at a sport ground which had been built to accommodate an ASEAN Games in the past. Apart from the performance here, we also perform at the Channel 9 in *Laṃpạng,* the *Cạmdẹvị*'s Festival in *Laṃbụn* where we stay overnight at Pạ́ung's place, at the restaurant in a garden by the Ping River, and at the Golden Jubilee of the Monfort College and Bicentennial Ceremony of *ratnàkọsindr̀* (Bạngkauk's era), when we build a tower that is used during the day as a short cut to climb up to the first floor, and at night as a platform for Gīang to do the solo torch-*blaung*s, while below, on the football ground, fifty students do the torch-*blaung*ing.

The royal barge Suvarṇhongs̀ traverses the whole length of the football field during the day. Inside it squat the students, cramped, among whom I am one, while the rowers do their job to the recitation on the loud-speaker of verses to the occasion as it is done with the real barges on the Càobrayạ River.

Following the boat, we perform as usual before the audience, and then there follows a competition of the two-handed swords where cushioned rattan-swords are used.

At night we sleep together in the practice room and I wake up to the sound of fighting between Yuddh and *Vậe* who are both my seniors. The latter is a disciplinary officer in the army, and he has the right to carry a gun around. He had drunk and exchanged harsh words with some of those young people who came to the festival when, brandishing his gun, he told them to be gone.

Yuddh must have coaxed to get the gun from him, for which he became infuriated afterwards. They fought a real fight, and waking up I see *Vậe*

beside himself with rage and lets fly the huge staff dangerously around while Yuddh marvellously dodges and from behind holds fast to his dear friend.

Before this happens, however, he side-steps and dodges, always trying to get at all times the more closer instead of getting away, for he must know how deadly a blow from such a pole can mean.

I am aghast, for I know how heavy that staff is. It is made from a piece of solid hard-wood, so big that the tips of my thumb and middle finger do not touch when I hold it in my hands, and standing on one end taller than me.

They are both specialised in the thing, and there is a pair of the staff but I do not know where the other one has gone to. In this manner each of the blows misses him by a hair's breadth.

Bẹ̄ẹ̀ has to undergo an operation on his spine which hurts. But it gets worse and he has to have more operations one after another, getting from bad to worse every time. I cannot understand what happened, for he seemed to me to be initially fine before he visited this doctor. It is terrible to see someone waste away this way.

Tàum is a rather meek and polite boy, the dear one to us all. He is also perhaps the youngest. He used to be tiny, seemingly an easy target enough for bullies. But he seems to have grown so quick overnight that one day I find that he is taller than me and most of us except Jaïïvaḍhṅ and Gomsan.

But the pleasant smile is still there when he is harassed by a hoodlum who lived in front of the school, who is taller and heavier than him. One day the boy comes to our very door-step and demands a fight with him. He is here with is all his friends.

Tàum wants to use the practice room, so we lend it him and close the door behind the giant and him as they enter, with neither the windows open nor the lights on, the darkness of the room. Inside it must have been like the interior of a black box. Everyone is worried for him.

No longer than ten seconds after we closed the door there is a yell, 'That's enough! I've had enough!,' as though somebody was in great panic in the face of death, and then there are knocks on the door coming from inside the room.

We opened the door to let them out and there the giant stands, full with sweat, his shirt all rumpled up while Tàum looks as though nothing had happened and he just came back from a walk.

'We are leaving now', the giant says authoritatively to his people.

Nobody apart from the two know what had happened during the ten seconds in that dark and hot room. None of us asked Tàum later what he had done to that fellow who had been so proud until that day. But I soon notice the disappearance of the giant who, as a bane of civilisation, had bullied

young students around this area.

I cannot help but feel a chill down my spine every time I think about this. Here is a fighter enough who neither boasts nor quarrels, always strong but never aggressive, polite but never weak. Never wanting to fight, he gives it no second thought when the time comes, and when it is finished thinks about it no more. Happy to say, I feel myself inferior by comparison, even though he is one of the juniors in our *saṃnak*.

Lhim is unfortunate enough to get a wound in his eyeball caused by a spark which flew from the swords when they struck against each other.

After Siddh has gone to the vocational school to do his agricultural studies, I perform with my new partner Cŭn. Once I also perform the staff fighting with San.

There is an old poem that our teacher always sings. We never dare ask him to repeat it for us in full, so we try to gather it from bits and pieces. Bẹ̄ is particularly good at this. He has a good memory and always remember twice as much as we do.

Noḅ ọeï, noḅ kẹ́ś
Vhài dai dẹvẹ́ś duk diśạ,
Iḳ brabuddh bradharrm lāṃ lọkạ,
Dāng ḅidáur, mạrdạ́, grụ, ạcạrỳa.

Ca ràïraṃ ạvudh yuddhjaï
Hàị prạkoṭ kroek krai phặe baiśạl.
Kiarti pravati fhạk vāi naị taṃnạn
Hàị lụklhạn raṃluek nuek braguṇ.

Tặe ḅọrạṇ nạn mạ Daiï klàḳrặeng
Khankhaeng blẹng ạvudh sudṕriaḅ dái.
Ạyudhyạ tok aḅ yaḅyàuï pai
Hẹtu mi jàị gon Daiï rāi fhịmụe.

Brau tạek gvạm sạmaggị dhạnị lòm,
Pradẹ́ś com, tặe Daiï mài rāi jụ̀e.
Vijạḳạr ḍạḅdaiï Daiï fhuekprụe.
Rao yued́ thụe kauḅkặu tặukan mạ.

Nàgaur Śrị Ạyudhyạ dhạnị
Cueng mài sìn gondị́ ḍang dị vạ.
Ẹkrạj jạti Daiï ḍài gụen mạ
Brau vijạ ḍạḅdaiï ḍài cụacun.

Ḅaṃḅoang ḅụjit añjulị
Ḅarrbjon dạ̀n dị goeï kù̀anhun
Cong sthit yŭ ḍòaï jòaï ao ḅuñ
Kạruṇ lụk Daiï naị paccuḅan

Ḱạṃrong màn cit zụ̀e thụe Sacca,
Mị bla roeng rạeng khaengkhạn.
Hàị ḱạḅdaiï gù Daiï pai nirandr,
Dhaṃrongġ màn gù fạ̄ dhạnị

We could perhaps translate this into English as the following.

O, I bow
to the gods in all directions,
to the Buddha and Dharma,
father, mother and teachers.

This weapon I shall wield
to make it known to all the world
and leave such legend as that which
our children shall thank.

From time immemorial Daiïs are strong and brave.
The wielding of the weapons is second to none.
Ȧyudhyạ perished
not because Daiïs were not able.

For disunity the city fell,
the country sank, but the culture remained.
And with it Daiï Sword is practised
which we hold fast and pass down through generations.

The good city Ȧyudhyạ
thus lacks no good men, as we say.
We regained independence
with the help of the Daiï Swords.

I pray to the gods,
our progenitors who had helped.
Pray they are here in us to sympathise and
help the present generation

be faithful, honest, truthful,
strong and untiring.
Let the Swords be forever with the Daiïs
and remain as long as does the sky.

The worst offence that we do to our friends at school is to call them by their father's name. It seems like the names of our parents are sacred and it is a profanity, bordering on sacrilege, to call a person by the name of his father or mother. It is almost like calling by the name *Allah* the followers of Muhammad, *Jahovah* those of Jesus Christ, or *Yahweh* the god-fearing Jews.

This goes to show that people need a god. In Asia where the main philosophy believed is Buddhism, no gods may exist in theory. But the father and the mother then become the gods to their children. To a certain degree this is true because they help each other to create the child. This is philosophically deduced not even from our own experience but from the observation of what happen around us.

But religions argue that there must be the Origin of all origins, therefore both our ancestors, offsprings and us have a common Father and nobody is anyone's god. This Common Origin of us is unique in that it is the subset of our understanding of the Singularity but this is a subset that encompasses the superset, which is the whole universe itself.

Suppose that we take, for instance, the Big Bang as the origin. Then the Big Bang itself is no god, but its predecessor is, which is beyond our understandings and physics. At the present moment we may say that this is some time before the Planck's Time. So somewhere beyond that, we may say, sits God.

I conjecture that we shall never understand God, or rather how His Creation works. No matter how far we push at the limits of our understanding regarding the common question of the Origin, we can only arrive at some fenced-in area that we cannot trespass within the boundary of which lies the key unknown that is God.

Empiricism says that all our theories, being based on assumptions, are themselves assumption. Because of these fundamental assumptions involved, for example those in the Euclidean Geometry, we cannot claim that we understand anything until we can create it. This makes the Origin impossible to understand, since by definition we would need the whole universe to recreate it.

Our imagination is far more friendly and useful to us, for only then can we, who are most insignificant in the relative size, claim to understand what happens inside, for instance, a star. The physicals are based on practice. Beyond them is the imagination, which is based on experience, and beyond this the faith which only exist because we are a part of the God.

The physical is the subset of the imagination, which in turn is the subset of the spiritual. One could even say that the existence of faith already implies the existence of God. But the negation of this is not true, that is to say, the fact that you may have no faiths, which seems impossible, does not imply that God may not exist.

You should believe neither in my ideas nor in anybody's. But think about what I have said and in the end believe in your own ideas. All is equally well, even, whether our ideas agree with each other.

So in this realm of boxing you guard the names of your progenitors as dearly as your life. You never call Ḅē̱ 'Jaïyuddh'. Neither do you ever call

Kṣẹmbocṅ 'Lob'. Nobody ever calls me 'Nivati', and I think the reason is that I am always solemn and therefore seem to be more mature than my age, so they are more considerate towards me. I never do this to anyone, for I know it is considered impolite.

All the swords' *raṃ*s of the *Śrị Ȧyudhyạ* school are namely *nộm gạu Sịd́ạ*, *Maiïrạb skod́ dab*, *khnạn sạud́sràuï*, *jāng prasạn ngạ*, *hongṡ pịk hak*, *tad́ joeng dian*, *khnạn khạ*, *kộng dhnụ*, *bạd́ khão ḅangsụrỳa*, *joeñdian*, *d̀ạḅ hau*, *raṃlàu*, and *d́oen plạeng*.

Those for the *krabı̌* of *Śrị Ȧyudhyạ* are namely *choed́chạï*, *prok nhà prok lhang*, *choed́chạï krạï prok*, *nạng krạï*, *saud́ phak*, *thvạï dian*, *joed́ làu*, *troac bol*, *d̀oen dạeng tlaud́*, *Macchạnu fhào d̀ặn*, *Hnumạn vhạek faungnāṃ*, and *raṃ làu*.

For the Śrị Ȧyudhyạ *blaung* are namely *ḅạek dàen*, *sụa lạk hạng*, *yọn blaung*, *troac bol*, *ḅọk dhong*, *bạï rụa*, *dạeng sụa*, and *hạḅ nūa*.

And for the Śrị Ȧyudhyạ *ngą̄ö* are namely *d́oen bromh*, *Cọchọ lụḅ nhoad́*, *Kratòa dạeng sụa*, *Kumbhkaṇd̀ laḅ hauk* (*troac bol*), *bạek sụa*, *bọk dhong*, *troac bol*, *nạng lauï*, *choed́chạï*, *thẹr kvạd́ vad́*, *ngą̄ö krạï*, and *dạeng sụa*. For this lore I thank *bı̌* D́ạeng.

For the new style presently taught in schools, the *raṃ*s for the *krabı̌* are namely *lauïjạï*, *goang dad́ hụ*, *nheḅ khàng*, *tàng śauk*, *còang nhà còang lhang*, *goang pàung nhà*, *dà yakṡ*, *sauï d́ạö*, *goang tae*, *Hnumạn vhạek faungnāṃ* (*vhạek màn*), *lod́ làu*, and *joeñ dian*.

For the swords these are *tặu d́àm*, *ḅạek*, *dad́hụ*, *riang mhaun*, *tad́ họa dian*, *dà yakṡ*, *săung klàung*, *kạkḅạd*, *ḅạek càung*, *fan Sịd́ạ*, *saud́sràuï*, *lod́ làu*, and *dẹb raṃbueng*.

For the *ngą̄ö* there are *doan nhà*, *baḅ śauk*, *bạï rụa*, *tặu khàu*, *săung klàung*, *pok nhà pok lhang*, *sụa lạk hạng*, *tăi rạö ḅon*, *tăi rạö làng*, *lod́làu*, and possibly two others.

For the *blaung* there are *dīng lhang vạd́ nhà*, *bak śauk*, *nạeḅ kạï*, *tặu khàu*, *sặung klàung*, *pok nhà pok lhang*, *sụa lạk hạng*, *tăi rạö ḅon*, *khad́ lhang*, *tăi rạö làng*, *lod́ làu*, and one other.

The guarding position of *moaï daiï* (Daïï boxing) is in general higher than that of the swords. In *moaï gạd́ juak* the hands are wound with rope to support their bones. Starting from the wrist the rope covers the back and the palm of the hand until it covers the whole hand up to the tip of the fingers.

Then returning to the wrist the rope goes to the tips of the fingers to gather and pull the ropes there back towards the knuckles. The rope is then twisted until it becomes tight and hard, and then a thin rope the size of the matchstick is threaded through the stubble to fix and align it.

This rope-wound boxing varies in style from one place to another, for ex-

ample *Gọrạj*, *Jaiyạ* and *Lobḥurị*. The rope covers up to the wrist in the case of *Moaï Jaiyạ*. For *Lobḥurị* it covers half way up the lower arm and for *Gọrạj* all the way to the elbow.

At the Lhakmuang Ring a boxer from Khmẹr died in his bout with the rope-boxer from *Utràdítth*, *Bạe Līangprasroẹth*, and the rope-wound boxing bouts were abandoned.

The *moaï Jaiyạ* uses the elbow, fist, knee and leg.

There are nine types of elbow. These comprises the six forward *śauk* (elbows), namely *baḥ* (fold), *chiang* (diagonal), *dạeng* (stab), *kradūng* (pound), *soeï* (up-shove), *tàng* (stand), and the three *śauk klaḥ* (reverse elbows), namely *chiang khùen* (diagonally upward), *chiang long* (diagonally downward), and *lọ̄n* (bald).

There are four types of *mhad́* (fists), namely *kradūng* (pound), *soeï* (shove up), *trong* (straight), and *vhĭang* (cast).

There are six *khăo* (knees), that is *d́ọd́* (jump), *dọn*, (single), *kratậï* (rabbit), *lạ* (leave), *lauï* (flying), and *nāuï* (little).

There are ten *dāo* (feet), that is *chad́*, *fạd́* (hit), *klạng* (middle), *nheḥ* (attach), *sụng* (high), *tad́* (cut), *tăm* (low), *thịḥ* (shove), *toḥ* (slab), and *trong* (straight).

Traditionally, one could carry with him, with the believe that they will bring him victory and safety, a host of items, for example *biraud́*, *bismaur*, *monggol*, *praciad́*, and *trakrud́*.

The *biraud́* is made of paper, *bismaur* a thin metallic sheet, *monggol* a cloth ring with a tail worn around the temples of the head, *praciad́* a cloth ring or jacket, and *trakrud́* a wound metallic sheet.

In practice there are several ways to use the fist, for example *ad́*, upper-cut, the force of which comes from you body through the upper arm; *bùng tọa jok*, lurching punch, where you jump with the momentum of your whole body; *jòang sàn*, hook; *trong lōm tọa*, straight with the body falling after it; *trong vhĭang lhăi*, straight with throwing from the shoulder; and *vhĭang*, cast.

The elbow has the *kradạek khậng nhậ*, forward impact; *klaḥ lhang*, reverse; *soeï khùen*, shove upwards; *tịlong*, hit downwards; and *vhĭang lhăi*, cast from the shoulder.

There are more to the feet than the others. This is one of the reasons that Moaï Daiï is sometimes dubbed the *kick-boxing*. The feet can be divided into *fạd́* (hit), *te* (kick) and *thịḥ* (shove).

For the kick there are *fạd́*, hitting, where the momentum curves up and then down, exploiting the earth's gravity; *krad́ọd́ te*, jump kick; *lhang dāo*, back part of the foot; *sòn dāo*, heel; *trong*, straight; and *vhĭang*, casting, the

momentum goes parallel to the ground.

For the shove there are *cik khyùm nīü*, dig and grasp with the toes; *cik plạï nīü*, dig with the toes' tip; *khàng*, side; *lhang*, back; *sòn*, heel; and *trong*, straight. And the heel may be used for the hitting.

For the knee there are *khăo fạ́* where the head bows low, the knee rises and comes down against the face; *gō̤ng*, curve, side and parallel to the ground; *kradạek*, impact; *lauï*, flying; *te*, kick, side at 45° upwards; and *trong*, straight.

These are the *mạe māi* (basic formulas). Next are the *lụk māi* (variations). Never carelessly practice the following with your friends.

Ḅạdạ lụḅ baktṛ̀, a foot on the face: the right hand wards off an attack made by a right hand, and the right foot goes straight up to the chin, and if this misses it comes down and forwards to the face.

Ḅarrbot thlŏm, avalanche: guard the left arm against the attacking right leg, then fall on the thigh with the elbow of that arm.

Ḅẹn sumẹ̀ru, deflecting the mountain: here the right arm wards off a left knee, then the left foot steps in and the left elbow goes to the face.

Blik phặendín, overturning the ground: a left step in for a left knee, then the right arm goes under the leg hinge and lifts up.

Bra Rạm caung thnon, Rama barring the whole road: take a left step outside of the attacking right hand, counter the attack simultaneously by the right hand to the face while the left shin to the ribs.

Bra Rạm ḱoen ḱong, the rambling Rama: the left foot receives the momentum from the thigh of an attacking right leg, then with this rises the body and together with it the right knee to the chest or chin.

Bra Rạm fạ́ śaur, Rama hits the arrow: a right step in for a right elbow; edge of the hand attacks the arm hinge.

Bra Rạm hak śaur, Rama breaks an arrow: step right in when attacked by a right elbow, then with the right hand grasps at the wrist and with the left the elbow and pushes it up.

Bra Rạm nặ̄ö śaur, Rama draws the bow-string: with one arm guard the coming double elbows from above, knee bent and chin to chest, then return with the hand of the other arm.

Bra Rạm yan śaur, Rama pushes the arrow: a right step in with the right hand to the right shoulder to stop the coming right elbow; the right or alternatively left elbow to the face, or the right knee to the rib.

Bra Rạm yhiaḅ Longkạ, Rama steps on Longkạ: the right foot steps on the thigh of the attacking left leg and rise with it to return with the shin to the head.

Cȧurkhẹ̀ fạ́ hạng, a crocodile sweeps with its tail: step in to the right when

attacked by a right hand, then step the left foot and using it as a pivot turn clockwise around to attack with the right heel.

Ḱaḅ jvạlạ, put off the light: take a left step out when the right is attacking, the left hand pushes it down while the right hand attacks simultaneously.

Dayạe gāṃ sao, Dayạe supports the pole: step right, the left hand guards against the attacking right leg, then the left leg shoves at the supporting leg.

Doan khun śuek, the warrior's pike: both hands meet the attacking right leg at the ankle, turning your back to the other party and bowing your body down the right leg shoves at the chest or chin.

Ẹrạvaṇ soeï ngạ, the Ẹrạvaṇ shove up with its tusks: take a right step out against an attack by a left arm, the right arm wards it off and the left arm swings to attack.

Fhạn lụk ḅoaḅ: here the left step is taken inwards if the attack is by a left hand, the right hand wards it off while the left elbow goes towards the face.

Glụ̀en kradoḅ fhăng: supposing that a left hand is attacking, the right foot takes a step forwards to the left, then turn around in the counter-clockwise direction to attack with the left elbow.

Gộn rukkhmụl, brings down the Rukkhmụl: dodge a high kick by sitting down, then one hand holds the ankle of the standing leg and pull while the other hand pushes at the knee.

Hak lhak bejr, break the lasting pole: the left hand meets a left kick and the right grasp the heel of that leg, then jump up to sit astride the leg and pull with both hands.

Hak ngoang Aiïrạ, snap the elephant's trunk (proboscis): gather in the left arm the attacking right leg, then with the right hand covering the back of the head the right elbow goes to the knee bone or the thigh while the left arm lifts the leg up, and then possibly the elbow goes to the face.

Hnumạn ḅạek khậeng: dodge a kick, step on his other foot, then come up with fist to the chin.

Hnumạn fạ́d Kumbhaṇḍ̣, Hnumạn throws Kumbhaṇḍ̣ (a giant): grasp the attacking right leg, turn yourself around and pivoting it on your shoulder use it as a lever and bowing down throw the person over your head.

Hnumạn hak ḍặn, Hnumạn breaks through the guards: step out to the left if it is a right hand which attacks, the left hand deflects its course and then the counter attacks of the left elbow to the chin and simultaneously the right knee to the solar plexus.

Hnumạn thvạï vhạen, Hnumạn offers the ring: take a right step in when the attacking hand is a right, then with two hands attack to below the chin.

Hirañ mōan phậend́in, Hirañ (a giant) rolls up the ground: the right elbow

is up to guard the attacking right leg while the body is turned around counter-clockwise so that the left elbow goes to the face.

Hongṡ pịk hak, wing-crippled swan: step left in against an attack made by a right hand, the left hand wards it off; the right elbow blows against the left shoulder.

Ịkạ chịk rang, the crow tears a nest: both hands move upwards in a curve from the inside, breaking up the guarding of the arms from below, then jump and knee to the chest or chin.

Inhao dạeng krij, Inhao stabs with the kris: the right step in if the attack in front is also the right hand, the left hand wards off; the right elbow attacks.

Jvạ zad́ hauk: the right step out for the incoming arm is the left one, the left arm pushes away that arm; the right elbow attacks.

Kanghan tàung lom, the rotating sails in the wind: the right step out for an incoming left knee, the left arm wards off the knee and then goes under the leg hinge and lifts up, the right hand helps by pushing the chest back.

Khunśuek tị doan, a warrior wields the pike: take a left step out for a straight right; the right leg kicks.

Kraiśaur khậm hòaï, a deer crossing the creek: guard with the left hand against the attacking left leg, then the left foot shove at the other, supporting leg.

Kvạd́ mạr, sweep up the devil: the right hand touches the attacking right leg and moves from the knee to the ankle, and in doing so absorbs and annuls the incoming force, a right foot is stepped forwards.

Ling blīü, a nimble primate: step the right foot and dodge under an attack by a left leg, dash to behind the other party and holding on to both of his shoulders knee to the back.

Lōm khun doan, overturn the pike master: step to the left when the attack is by a left, the right hand wards it off; the right leg kicks.

Lụkgạng caḅ mhad́, the chin catches the fist: step left and inwards when a left hand is attacking, put the chin on the upper arm while the right hand pushes up at the elbow.

Mauñ yan lhak, a Mon pushes at the pole: guard a hand attack with both arms, then shove with the foot to the body.

Moṇḍọ nàng dậen, Moṇḍọ sits on the dais: when an attack comes on your right, turn around clockwise, jump up to sit full on the chest.

Moṇḍọ nàng tak, Moṇḍọ sits on the lap: place the left foot slightly in front, jump up to sit on the thigh of the attacking leg when it is still gathering the momentum, rise with it to the top and return with the elbow to the face.

Nạgạ bịd́ hạng, Naga twists its tail: the weight on the left foot when facing

the incoming right foot with the right palm, the left palm holds the heel, twists and then knee at the calf.

Nạgạ mud́ ḅạd́ạl, Naga dives underground: step the left foot forwards and squat down to dodge the attacking right leg, then with the right leg shove at the thigh of the standing leg.

Nạrạïn̈ ḅăn śiar, Naraya beheads: a right step is taken diagonally forwards when the attack is by a right hand, and the left hand swings over it to the temple.

Nạrạïn̈ khvạ̀ng cakr: step out to the left around a right hand attack, and then the right hand swings back to return.

Nhụ tăi rạ̈: the left hand holds the left wrist and the right hand the elbow, step back and pull in the same direction of the momentum; knee or leg attacks.

Pak lụkdauï, drive in the jack (or boule): the right foot steps forwards, facing the incoming right leg the right elbow meets the shin while the left hand guards the neck.

Pakṣạ vhạek rang: a right step in against a right attack, the left hand wards it off while the right hand attacks.

Pid́ pok jok d́òaï śauk: here when the attacking thing is a right hand a right step is taken inwards, the left hand covers the back of the head and the left arm the left ear, then elbow at the face.

Rad́ ngoang Ḛrạvaṇ, fasten the elephant's trunk: step right forwards and diagonally when a right leg is attacking, then push at the thigh with the left hand, then grasp it in the left armpit and the right hand goes to the face.

Rakrāe hak khạen, the armpit breaks the arm: take a left step forwards when a left hand is attacking, the right arm circles up from the inside and catches the wrist by the armpit then the right hand push up at the elbow.

Rạmsụr khvạ̀ng khvạn: jump, with one arm press down all the guards; the elbow in the other arm attacks.

Ṛụeṣị hoen, flying hermit: the left hand is pressed against just above the knee of the attacking right leg, then with its momentum and yours go for the face with your hand.

Sak boang mạlaï: a left step forward with the left hand pushing at the coming right hand; the right elbow attacks at the solar plexus.

Slaḅ fan plạ: step forwards and to the right, ward the incoming left punch with the left hand; your right hand attacks.

Śauk dāïdauï, elbow the nape: step forwards and outwards, a left step if a right hand is attacking, until behind your opponent and then elbow at the nape.

Soan doan: step forwards, the left arm punches out such that it meets the inner side of the incoming right arm, then follow by some other moves as see fit.

Ṭaṭheṛ gāṃ fhak: take a right step in against a right attack, guard against it with the left arm while the right hand attacks in return.

Viruṇ hok klaḅ: attack at the thigh of the attacking right leg with the right foot and vice versa.

Yan rukkhmụl: dodge a kick and with elbow push the leg up.

Yạu khao Brasumẹru: dodge and then punch to the chin.

Ỵoaṇ daud́ hạe, a Vietnamese casts the net: is done by sidestepping the shoving leg and then kick at the back side of the knee of the standing leg.

Jaïïvaḍṅ passed both the written exam and the interview for the AFS programme to go to the US for one year. Unfortunately he also passed the university entrance exams to study Medicine. He has decided to choose the latter as it cannot be postponed.

We have been learning an intensive course at the USIS here in *Jiangmhăị* for a few weeks to prepare our English for the AFS programme when he learns about his university entrance results.

In May he writes to tell me in New Zealand that Mị̀ got in the Department of Agriculture and will study at *Jiangmhăị* University. Ạ́em could not pass her exam, so she will study at Rạmgaṃhạeng University which is an open university following the steps of the Open University in the UK.

One day during my first year in secondary school I sit with three other members from the sword club having lunch in the cafeteria. It has been a long while since we last done this because each one of us are from a different class. I am the youngest in the group since all the others were in their second and third years.

The conversation go from one topic to another, always with plenty of fun in all the topics. One way of teasing another was by calling him by his father's name. Some people do not like it and consider it very rude. Even with your close friend you had to be careful at times not to overdo this kind of practice. He could get really mad at you or thought that you were hurting his honour.

Grown-ups did not do this that often, only kids. '*Tọ lạ̄eo*,' (we are grown-up now) Daiïs always say, '*loek lạ̄u jụ̀e bạ̀u*.' (stop mock me by my dad's name). Everyone knows this saying.

When we have lovely trainee teachers, fresh from their graduation, I like to tease them. But I never do it in a vulgar way, and people seem to like what I do. I liked it when people laughed off-guarded at my sincere and naive words. It gave me a sense of fulfilment that I had cheered up another person. Armed with genuine sincerity I never hurt anyone with my teasing.

In all my remarks I never hurt anybody. There are certain boundaries over which I would never venture. I maintain my creativity and sincerity throughout. Usually to other people nothing seems to be out of the way until someone with an uncultivated sense of humour makes his remark. Only then do they miss me and wish that I am around to save them from the unpleasantness. And often if I am around that is just what I normally do.

Women like to listen to what I say even while, or especially when I tease them. It is never too difficult to lighten the day of others if we have the mind to. In Japan, for instance, I shall come to learn in fifteen years' time from now that if someone whom you know is really mad at you, instead of blabbing on meaning less excuses you may just as well say, '*seppuku suru!*'

I am then always late to my Japanese language class I really feel guilty about this but do not know how to change myself. When I come to the class late again for who know how many times, and this time terribly so, I decide I have exhausted all the likely excuses and so merely wait a second for her excusing look to set in, then bow and say, 'Seppuku shimasu!' We later become friends. She likes to talk with me, and even at times confides to me some of her troubles and worries.

But still there are sometimes things you never understand.

One fine morning in our Chemistry class, she is young and kind, and is my first Chemistry teacher. I liked her very much and I know she feel the same towards me, a pure and untainted love. We merely exchange some touchés as usual, nothing out of the way, this much I am sure all the other 55 students can bear witness.

She writes some thing on the blackboard and say, 'This is important! You should try to memorise it'.

'This is important,' I tell my friend *Ṣẹm* at the back of the room softly, for I want to make sure that he does not miss what she has just said for it is important.

But she must have overheard what I said, and she says, 'But I suppose there may be someone in here who shall never need to use it', and she looks at me.

Now, she starts it you see, so I am simply crestfallen and looking at the floor agree with her, 'Of course someone in here shall never need to use it'. I believe what she says, for she is my beloved teacher.

But the rest of the class, you have to see them! What unreasonableness! They just go on giggling senselesslissimus.

'Shame on them!', I think. I feel all the more sad and devastated the louder they roar. She will probably think that was what I wanted, and nothing can be further away from the truth.

In the end I need to go to the teachers' common room, for *Pīak* who is both a teacher of Chemistry, for a higher year, and my sword teacher has come to our class and tell me that I should make things up with my teacher.

'*Vạ̀en*,' he says simply, 'go and apologise to your teacher!' So in that large common room I walk up to her who are sitting in the corner crying. There can be no questions whatever, neither exaggeration and imagination, for when I find her she has been crying her heart out audibly. She seems to have been doing so for a while and now her eyes are all red and flooded with tears which run down both sides of her face.

I kneel down on the floor by her side on the chair, prostrate both hands and a forehead not on the floor but on her very lap, and there I remain. Then she raises me up to my feet, and by that time I have some of her tears on my head.

To *kraḥ khạudọ̣s* someone (what I had just done) in the Daiï society is the best way to let someone knows you are sorry. I should have put my head on the floor according to the lore, but it was dirty and her laps are softer I could go to sleep on them in case she should never forgive me. And how could one miss such an excuse?

Anyway, she thanks me. Nothing to worry about, it was not me. And, yes, I may go now.

Back at the class none of the students had seen their teacher in tears. From now on I secretly try to protect her from other teases whenever they start to seem improper. I simply change their nuance or, if this does not help, direct them elsewhere. I have learnt my lesson and I want to see no one in the same shoes I once found myself in.

After this incident the teasing between us still go on as nothing had ever happened, except that she never cries again and I have a feeling that she is ever more polite towards me.

My sword master is the only person then who could stop me any time in almost any matter. The other day I happens to be in the principal's room asking for more financial supports from the school to my *jumnum ḱạḥdaiï* (Daiï sword club). The present sharings of resources are not fair, since the *ḱontrị̣daiï* (traditional Daiï music) Club where he rehearses several times weekly always gets the lion's part of it.

My sword master comes in at the crucial moment and says, 'Vàen, leave this to me'.

And, believe it or not, I put all my arguments down and take my leave without a single word more. I will never forget that surprised look on the principal's face, who has already stood up behind his desk and talks to me rigorously with energy. I have to fight for the right of my sword club since I am its president. *Vạ̀en*, by the way, is what people call me in our *saṃnak*. It

simply means the glasses, that is to say, spectacles.

I have been mean, however, because we do not need more money. We already have our swords and, moreover, wherever we perform we get some money all of which goes to the club's account. My master pays for many things from his own purse, and he never touches the money from our performances. More money from the school would simply go to the account, which already has enough anyhow. I doubt that *Pīak* would stop troubling his own pocket if our club became richer. So I am the only one, I guess, who is being unreasonable.

Back to the lunch, the time flies by as we talk ourselves out of the lunch break. The school bell rings signalling the beginning of the afternoon sessions. We loiter from the cafeteria behind all the other students. I stopped at a row of tap-water faucets to take in my fill of cool water before the sleepy lessons of the afternoon come.

Then still talking and laughing with one another we walk slowly past the board where some announcements have been put up. Jaïïvaḍhṅ and I chorused unpremeditated, 'Let's look at the announcements!'

We look at each other, surprised at having heard another person say our thought. 'Have I merely thought, and imagined my having said it?', I could not help but briefly wonder. I thought I was the only one who wanted to stay away from the class for as long as possible.

One ad seems interesting enough, also for both of us. It is the invitation to apply for a cultural exchange programme to go abroad through the American Field Service programmes. There are two programmes coming up. One is for those who want to go to America, the other for those to either New Zealand or Australia. All the programmes are to be for one year, but the New Zealand one is only for ten months.

'I'm going to apply to the one to America. Let's all apply together', cheerfully says Jaïïvaḍhṅ.

'All right. Let's go for it, shall we?', Cŭn chimes in who is my fighting buddy.

'I want to go to America too, same as Jaïïvaḍhṅ,' Bùng comes in, then turning towards Cŭn he says questioningly, 'How about you? You come with us too?' To which the latter replies with a nod of his head.

Or it is not a nod at all, for he *byak* his *nhạ̀* (face), an action represents what your forehead does when you nod your head *backwards*. It is not the reverse of a nod but means exactly the same thing, that is a consent. You only do this to your friends, otherwise it is considered impolite.

To give it a more definitive description, *kạrbyaknhạ̀* is, a reverse gesture of a nod by tilting his face slightly upward with his neck as a fulcrum so that it looked somewhat like a nod except that it was made upward instead of

downward'.

I might as well mention that to *yakgīü* what you do is jerk your eyebrows quickly upward and then return them to their usual position. This is the least polite of all, and it carries with it a nuance of contempt and defiance. Not only this, if you can do it with only one eyebrow, then it is even ruder.

Phngok họa (to nod), then, is absolutely all right, *byaknhạ̀* (to reverse-nod) is fine for a friend, *yakgīü* with two brows is ruder and with only one brow rudest. You are warned!

All three turn to look at me. (I am the president, remember?) I shrug, 'Sounds fun. Why not? You go apply together. I'll come along with you to get an application form and then think about it. You go for it, though! For me, I wouldn't stand a chance'.

But there are for it an exam and an interview. How I am going to make it I never know. I am only in Madhyom 4, the first year of the secondary school. This test is probably for all people from M4 up to M6. How could I stand a chance?

Since the beginning of this term when I began the M4 I am all excited about it, for now we have the members of the fairer sex in our class. We have moved into the only building in our school where there are girls studying. But this is another matter.

'I will have none of that,' presently says Jaiïvaḍhṅ, our last year's president, 'because I am going to apply, you too shall apply. It's no fun doing it alone. Don't worry. Your English is good, so you will be all right.'

'That's fine!,' I go on, 'But I am not going to America. I am going to go for the other one instead. I want to go to New Zealand. Let's *kracạï kaṃlang*, shall we?' To *kracạï kaṃlang* is to place your forces strategically instead of coming together and perish teamwise.

I remember having studied two years earlier in my Geography class about New Zealand when we learnt that the country has ten times more sheep than people and there are no conflicts between the Maoris and the people descending from their European ancestors.

This lack of racism makes it both rare and unique. 'This land,' (or rather lands) our books taught us, 'has many diverse geographical features, all very close to one another in islands which are comparably small'. I was greatly impressed.

New Zealand has its plateaus and tundras, fiord lands and plains suitable for agriculture. These plains are created by the alluvial deposits from the milky-coloured rivers coming down from high snowy mountains.

In the end it turns out that I become among us not the only one who passes the test but the only one whose circumstances are free enough to go.

In the Kiwi Land, apart from my sixth form study, I walk the Milford track with the Southerland Chapter of AFS, Arthur's pass with the Tramping Society of Ashburton, and Stewart Island and the aluminium smelting plant with Charlie. There is a visit to, and the cruises in the sounds of Blenheim and the ski trip to Mount Hutt.

I perform the *krabĭ* and the torch-*blaung* on various occasions in Christchurch in a *marae* on an AFS night, at a camp in Invercargill, and on *Ùaĭ*'s birthday party in Blenheim.

I visit and stay at a friend's farm where I see a satellite's component that has fallen on the farm. I play basketball in a few teams, but we always lose, probably from the same reason.

I live with a family of sportsmen, and my dad and mum try more than once to coach me to become a swimmer. But I could never catch up with the others, because I swim badly and wrongly if these are not the same thing, so I quit swimming for good.

My sixth-form English class at the Ashburton College teaches me how to approach literature, culture and philosophy. In the class, apart from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* which I must mention, we read and discuss *Bless the Beasts and Children* by Glendon Swarthout, where the following,

> O twayne me a twim, where the ffubalo jym,
> where the rede and the telopen zoom;
> where nibber is nat, a conframitous rat-tat-tat,
> and the dils are not icky all doom.

is the profound song with neither melodies nor words that is so tragic. For it represents the rage of the losers of the world in our present standard of competitiveness that is alien to God.

A hopeless and innocent child who is judged as being good for nothing sacrifices his life so that we may respect God and stop destroying other species as well as our own's. The lines above, never explained to us in the book, is how someone, who is maddened and beside himself by the indecencies of the world, might sound when he tries to sing the familiar 'Home on the Range',

> Oh give me a home, where the buffalo roam,
> where the deer and the antelope play,
> where seldom is heard, a discouraging word,
> and the skies are not cloudy all day.

The climax of the story, where the sense of urgency and the despair feeling of the quest led the words to be mixed up in the head of Cotton, the leader of the group.

After having entered the Ṛamgaṃhạeng University I move from place to place, and home finds me wherever I lay my hat, except that I have no hats.

I meet Young and Knok, so the nice folks all seem to be here while the less friendly ones are either studying Engineering or Medicine.

I am doing the degree of Computer Science, and so are they, though they turn to something else later. Both agree that I am crazy. 'Poor Vậen,' Young muses, 'it must have been because of your disappointment. You could have done better in the university-entrance exams'.

I agree with them, but not until after I have visited them at the university's second campus one day. They live in the same building, so we sat together in one of their rooms and talked. That was when Young suggested, as is his wont, that I would never dare walk into the campus having on only the T-shirt and the underwear.

Nobody could challenge me to do something honest, so I went downstairs in that manner, walked the 100 metres and entered the gate. It was during the weekend, so there were not that many people around.

It was agreed that I would walk to the canteen and back, but instead of doing that I hid in the bush behind the wall for the whole designated time, before coming back to claim the bet of 100 *ḅạd*.

Every first-year student studies at this second campus, but I live behind the first campus, which is an hour away by bus, and have to go there everyday on the 207 bus. The buses are incredibly packed, especially on the way back after the class because everyone always leaves at the same time.

I also attend classes in Astronomy, Japanese, English Literature and Writing, all of which are irrelevant to my degree. In the writing class we learn how to write a *haiku* in English. There are to be three lines, their lengths respectively being 5, 7 and 5 syllables. Then I write the following one.

The cobra poised,
Waiting for its prey to come
closer to its side.

Cuĺạlongkaurṇ Mảhạvidyạlaï, or Chulalongkorn University officially in English, was built from the remaining of the money that people donated for the purpose of the statue of King Rama V on horse back which was done in France. Thus it was built with an original fund of 950,982.39 *ḅạd* on a 523.6 acre piece of land in Taṃḅol Pdumvan under King Mongkuḍ́ who is the son of Rama V, King Culcaum.

Before that there used to be on this piece of land a Mảhạd́lek school, that is a school for royal pages, which was changed into the new Civil Servant School

of King Culcaum on 1 January 1910. On 26 March 1916 King Mongkuḍ changed the premises again into the Culạlongkaurṇ university.

It had four departments, namely Medicine, Public Administration (Raṭhpraśạsnàśạstṛ), Engineering and the fourth and last faculty, the Department of Literature and Science. The Public Administration Department was transfered to Dharrmśạstṛ University in 1933. Two independent departments were created in 1934 for Architecture and Pharmacy (Phnạek Prungyạ). Another independent department, Veterinary, was founded in 1937. In 1939 saw two more departments came into being, one Dentistry, the other Commerce and Accountancy. Department of Political Science was created in 1948, Department of Education 1957, Department of Graduate Studies 1961 and Department of Mass Communication and Public Relations 1965.

There are buildings named after Professor Thaeḅ Niḷanidhi, who was Vicechancellor from 17 August 1957 to 29 August 1961, and Professor M R V Slaḅ Ldạvalẏa who was the Secretary from 25 November 1949 until 1 March 1956. Strangely enough, Field-marshal Plạek Biḅụlsonggrạm was the Chancellor from 25 November 1936 to 3 November 1944, and then again from 21 October 1944 until 16 August 1950.

During 1986 and 1987 I sing much. We form a group who travel together often. Our group comprises, among others, Ben, Mūï, Pop and Tŭï. Tậu sings but he never travels with us. He is a good singer, a tenor with light, resonating operatic voice.

Man is also a good tenor but he never sings with us. He is somewhat self-centred and eccentric. He comes to see our production La Traviata at the auditorium at CU and says that he likes it. His favourite tenor is Placido Domingo (b. 1941) whereas Tậu's is Luciano Pavarotti (b. 1935).

David who sings Alfredo for us in the opera prefers Pavarotti's to Domingo's singing because the the former's method is correct whereas that of the latter is wrong. 'It only works for himself', he says, 'No one knows how it does. It is of no use to others and you get nowhere if you follow him'.

I think that people like his singing because of the tension in it. You expect his voice to crack at anytime, even when no very high notes are involved. The tension is resolved with the completion of each phrase. This tension and resolution make his singing a dramatic and tragic trait.

By contrast, Pavarotti's voice is so relaxed and resonates so well with the surrounding that you hear it coming from everywhere. It engulfs you whole, and in doing so rids all the muscles of your body of tension and while it lasts even your eyes lose their focus.

La Traviata (*the wayward one*, 1853) is an opera in three acts by Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901). The text is written by Francesco Maria Piave (1810–1876) after the drama *La Dame aux Camélias* (1852) by Alexandre Dumas (*fils*, 1824–1895), after his novel of the same title (1848) which is based on his

own experience.

This opera is the story of the courtesan Violetta who is loved by and thereby loves Alfredo Germont. She renounces her love to suit the request made by Giorgio who is Alfredo's father. Then he insults her, and has himself denounced by his own father and threatened by Baron Douphol. She dies of consumption in her lover's arm. How tragically romantic!

Alexandre Dumas junior is the son of Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870), also a writer, who in turn is the son of Alexandre Davy de Pailleterie Dumas (1762–1806), a French general and commander of a cavalry of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821).

The following year, 1987, La Traviata is played in Singapore where David also sings. We go there together in Ben's wagon, the Volkswagen, to watch them play.

I sang the Messiah at the *Vaḍhṇạ* Church in 1986 when Man was the soloist. I am singing it again now in 1987 when the soloist is Santi who is Man's teacher. He used to conduct the RU Chorus, and so he is also the teacher of Tặu.

He became well-known through his singing the nationalistic songs during the predicament regarding Vietnam and our other communist neighbours, in the decade before about five years ago, some example of the songs of which are *Gvạmfhan an Sụngsud́* (the highest dream) and *Nhak Phặendín* (unworthy to live).

Georg Friedrich Händel (1685–1759) wrote the Messiah in 1741. This is the Messiah which, when Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) heard the chorus sang its 'Hallelujah' in the Westminster Abbey, rose to his feet with the crowd, wept, and said, 'He is the master of us all'.

He can achieve great effects with simple means. The tenor's solo part begins with, "'Come forth thee! Come forth ye my people!", saith your God', and the Hallelujah Chorus, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world is become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever'.

Kaṃdhaur is also a good singer, or so I have heard for I have never heard him sing. I think that he sings bass, but he no longer sings now, only teaches.

Ben introduces me to *Der Ring der Nibelungen* by Richard Wagner (1813–1883) and let me listen to his records of this opera. Kaṃdhaur also like this opera. He often watches it in Bayreuth, in Bavaria, which has been home to the Richard Wagner Festivals since 1876.

On 22 May 1872 the foundation stone for the theatre was laid, and on the same day Wagner conducted Beethoven's 9$^{\text{th}}$ symphony in the local theatre. The theatre opened on 13 August 1876 with the Rheingold launching the first complete Ring cycle ever to be given. *Der Ring der Nibelungen* comprises

three days' concert and a preliminary evening, dubbed *tetralogy.*

Wagner wrote his own text which is based on the Nibelung Saga. The Nibelungen (Nibelungs) are dwarfs in the German mythology who possess great underground riches, and whose king is Nibelung.

Written by an anonymous author around 1200, the *Nibelungenlied* (the song of the Nibelungs) depicts Siegfried, the master of the Nibelungs' treasure, being exploited by Gunther to win the hand of Brunhild for him, his marriage with Kriemhild who is Gunther's sister, treacherous murder of Siegfried by Hagen, and the revenge for the same on the latter by his wife Kriemhild.

The four parts of the opera are Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried and Götterdämmerung. In *Das Rheingold* the Nibelung dwarf Alberich renounces love to steal the Rhinegold from the Rhine-maidens. He forges himself a ring and thereby becomes master of the world. Obtained by trick from Alberich, Wotan gives both the Rhinegold and the Ring to the giants Fasolt and Fafner as payment for the building of the Valhalla, the hall in which slain heroes are feasted.

Immediately the ring shows its sinister power, for Fafner kills Fasolt. Wotan begets Siegmund and Sieglinde on earth with the hope that they will one day kill Fafner and restore the ring to the Rhine-maidens. Sieglinde is married to Hunding while Siegmund has to lead a wandering life.

In *Die Walküre* (the Valkyrie), Siegmund pulls the sword Nothung from the rock after having made love with his own sister Sieglinde. Brünnhilde, Wotan's favourite Valkyrie, sides with Siegmund, but Wotan shatters Nothung and kills him. Siegfried is born while Brünnhilde is put to sleep on a rock surrounded by fire. He is brought up by Mime, the dwarf and brother of Alberich.

In *Siegfried*, Mime plans to kill Siegfried but is killed by him first despite the latter having been reared by him. Then with Nothung in his hand and the ring on his finger he shatters Wotan's spear, goes through the fire, wake Brünnhilde up and makes love to her who is his aunt.

In *Götterdämmerung* (the twilight of the gods) Siegfried is drugged by Alberich's son, Hagen, and forgets who he is. He forces his own wife and aunt to marry Gunther, whereby his aunt plans his death with Hagen and Gunther.

He is given the second drug to restore his memory, and dies by Hagen's spear in his back. His wife removes the ring from his finger, puts it on her own and plunge into the flaming pyre to her death together with her horse Grane.

Before you have the time to start counting the hall collapses, the Rhine overflows, Hagen drowns, Valhalla is all aflame, the kingdom of the gods is destroyed and a new era of love dawns. Obviously in this new era one loves his sister and aunt but never sleeps with them.

This opera was misused by Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) and his ultra-nationalist and racist Nazism, to whom Siegfried was adopted as the ideal youth. Obviously they wanted to get back to the previous era before the gods perished in the Valhalla's flame, and possibly to seek again after the lost ring.

At the Śriṇàgrindrviroḷjṅ University at Prasạnmitr Tặu, Man and I watch Kaṃdhaur's video of the Bayreuth production of this opera, in which Siegfried cries, 'Nothung! Nothung! neidliches Schwert!'

We also watch on other occasions *Le Nozze di Figaro* (the marriage of Figaro, 1786) by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (the barber of Seville, 1816) by Gioacchino Rossini (1792–1868). Both of these operas are based on a novel by Pierre Augustin Caron Beaumarchais (1732–1799), that is *le Barbier de Séville* (1775) and *le Mariage de Figaro* (1784, some say it was from *La Folle Journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro* of 1778) in the opposite order.

Il Barbier di Siviglia is a story of the courting and marriage of Count Almaviva with Rosina who is under the guardian of Bartolo, who wants to marry her himself. Almaviva disguises first as Lindoro, a poor student, and then as Don Alonso, a singing teacher. The marriage is seen to by Figaro, a barber and factotum.

This story has also been made into operas by Elsperger (1783), Benda (1785), Schulz (1786), Isouard (1796), Morlacchi (1816), Dallargine (1868) and Graffigna (1879).

Le Nozze di Figaro is a story of the marriage between Figaro and Susanna. The Count wants to make love to the latter, and Bartolo wants to trap Figaro into marrying Marcellina. Both Marcellina and Bartolo, however, turn out to be Figaro's parents. In the garden the Count courts his own wife, who is in the disguise of Susanna. All ends well.

Albeit his unaccustomed skill, Mozart only writes customary music. It is said that he laughs at the idea of being original, and yet his music bears the most distinct mark that can seldom be mistaken for those of the others.

May be one of the reasons for this is that he inspires none and is followed by no one. He remained a prodigy until his death, never philosophised or became a philosopher.

One should approach music differently depending on whether he is a listener, scholar, musician, or composer. The listener listens first, and then finds out about the form later. The scholar must know both the structure and the harmony to be able to probe and discuss what he hears. The musician, on the other hand, never listen before he has played the piece first, otherwise he risks the influence of other people's interpretation on his. The composer must wrestle with form unless he is content to write only small pieces.

Music is a communication, but not every piece of music is meant for ev-

eryone. Most pieces are a communication from the composer to the listener, others from the same to the scholar or musician. But nowadays there are more and more communications between composers.

Ben says, 'The purpose of music is to communicate', when I observe that his repertoire reaches as far as the early romantic period and there stops. I mention to him Arnold Schönberg (1874–1951) and Paul Hindemith (1895–1963), to which he says, 'Music no longer has any meaning to me unless it can communicate'.

Schönberg may be unable to communicate with Ben through his music, but whether this was his purpose is questionable. A composer should contribute new ideas and create new things, or at the least he should carry on from where his predecessor has stopped.

Schönberg, or at least some of his later works, communicates with composers, which include his students. His understanding and insight into the working of harmony (*Manual of Harmony*, 1911) can find no equals. He profoundly influences the music of the 20$^{\text{th}}$ century.

In this way one may say that he stands in a status similar to that of Beethoven. But while it is sometimes said that he influences the Neo-romantic School, as Stravinsky does the Anti-romantic, Beethoven influences all the schools that come after him.

Atonal music should always be viewed as a communication among composers. It is a probe into the working of the ears as much as abstract paintings that of the eyes. Both help us understand better how our mind works.

We travel to various places in Daiï. We go to the national park Khaoy̆hăị which is in the Bnomd́ongrak Mountain Range and covers the areas of four provinces, namely Nàgaurnạyok, Nàgaurrạjsịmạ, Prạcịnbụrị and Srabụrị. It was known in the past as the D́ongbyạfai, a dense and deadly jungle that divided the middle part of Daiï from the northeast. In 1922 some 30 people settled there, and on 18 September 1962 it became the first national park of Daiï. The highest peak here is the Khao Ròm at 1,351 metres. Others average approximately 1,000-metre high.

In 1987 I live at a dormitory at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University. My room mates are Cīaḅ, Kẹ́ and Nhĭng.

Yhị́ also lives here on a different floor. I go together with him to the wharfs at Glaungtoeï because there is a peace ship that sails around the world carrying books which they sell cheaply. I buy quite a few books, some of which prove not so interesting. But there is a very good one called *Worlds in Collision* by Immanuel Velikovsky.

My beloved Ace, was it you who asked me whether we love each other, or was it I who were dreaming? I am afraid I answered you too late, but let me tell you something on the matter regarding England and the Inter-Rail

Ticket.

The first time that I went to England it was for a job training. I was doing my Bachelor of Engineering in Mineral Engineering at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University in Ḅạngkauk.

As every third-year student, who was called a junior, had to have a training with a company during his summer vacation, and I did not want to do mine in Daiï, I had tried hard to find opportunities to go working abroad. The reason why I did not want to take what was called an engineering practice course in Daiï was that I did not want to study the Mineral Engineering.

During the second term of my first year at the faculty when we were allowed to choose our main subject, I chose mine Electrical, Computer, Mechanical, Petroleum, Chemical, Mining Engineering and so on. There were about thirteen engineering branches for us to choose from and I put Mining Engineering as my sixth choice.

That year Electrical Engineering was a hit, and my number two through to five were taken up by so many students as their first choice so I was left with my Mining one. The Mineral Engineering was a part of Mining Engineering and came later.

As you can see that I did not want that subject in the first place, I always tried to switch to Electrical Engineering thereafter. But because of my poor grades, which started right at the very beginning of my career studying at Cuĺạ and without which I would have got my first choice of major in the first place anyway, I never managed to get anywhere near my dream.

Looking back now I think I like Mineral Engineering. When I was in New Zealand I took Geology and went fossil-hunting with my teacher whose acknowledged nickname among his students was Worm, but you shouldn't let him hear you calling him that of course.

But I always did what people around me did and always followed what was fad at the time, so I had nearly no qualm at all in choosing Electrical Engineering when I was asked to choose something. Many of my friends did the same thing anyway, so why not?

From my childhood on I had been turning away from my dreams one by one, starting from my wanting to study Astronomy, and then Cosmology, and then Engineering, before I came back to that last one again.

Yes I was a happy child in a sense. I did what my friends did and got on well all right. And no, I was not a happy child in a sense that I had not nearly enough of myself to hold on to. You know what I mean.

In order to find a place to fulfil my dream of doing the engineering practice abroad (one reason for this was that I wanted to do the job training at an electrical engineering firm instead of in a mine which I thought I hated at the time) I went to the British Council in Ḅạngkauk and looked up a directory of

companies in UK. Having noted down about twenty addresses, having looked at them for a while not knowing what I should do I went to visit Guṇ Aṃnạc to seek advice. In Daiï Guṇ is a prefix to be put in front of a person's name to imply a somewhat high regard felt toward that person, much the same as *san* is in Japan for example Hashimoto *san* (Mr Bridgesfoot, possibly).

Also as in the case of *san*, Guṇ is a title with equality between both sexes, that is it can be used before a female's as well as before a male's name. You must never call anyone *kuṇ*, of course, because that means a disabled person. *Khun*, however, means a king, and that is even better flattering than the *guṇ* provided that you knew how to use it.

Aṃnạc and I got to know each other while I was a first year student at the Rạmgaṃhạeng University, which was then the only open-university in Daiï. It is located in Bạngkauk. I was a tenor in the university's chorus called the Rạmgaṃhạeng University Chorus or RU Chorus for short.

One day I followed a group of a few members in the choir to visit his home for an interview. *Guṇ* Aṃnạc was an architect and the wooden two-storey house he rented on Sukhumvid 43 Road was the office of his own company as well as his home.

The house was air-conditioned and was furnished with the right proportion of Daiï somewhat-antiques and music. A full-sized concert grand had its body stashed away under the stairs which turned up toward the second floor. On one side of it stood a wall of the house, on the other lay the part of the same stair before the landing. The lighting inside the house were all table lamps and ceiling spot-lights with warm-toned colour. The lamps were all incandescent and none fluorescent.

Having said that, the Rạmgaṃhạeng University was started in 1971 whereas the Dharrmśạtṛ University began in 1934 as an open-university. But the latter later closed itself. No, it has not closed itself *down* but simply *closed* itself, which is the more pity since I could have gone there instead for all I know, which in turn could have meant a pity for *them* there.

The name 'Ramkamhaeng' is the English name of the university, while 'Rạmgaṃhạeng' the Daiï name, which has become a possible rendering of the correct Daiï spelling since December 2001 when I discovered the method *alone* while living, sadly also alone, at the then new Sir Charles Groves Hall of Residence in Manchester, UK.

So if a nobody should say otherwise, there you have the information. But do not judge him for he knew not what he did. But that is a matter for another time in the present world.

I went to the border of the Snowdonia National Park. And I was also in Liverpool on the very day that the football fans there accidentally crushed (unbelievable) one another to death (60 persons, Jesus!)

I went sailing from Portsmouth to Cherbourg and back. Rough sea on the way there it was, but smooth as silk on the return trip. We walked in that small but lovable French town when my friends bought some wine. We then sat together outside and in the sun to have our coffee.

I had to talk with the police upon returning to the UK because I only had a single entry visa, but fortunately (for me) we have with us a professor so there was no problem. Actually it was *his* boat.

I felt knocked about in the car on the way back home.

Regarding my InterRail ticket, it was bought (the ticket) in Dover. With it I went to Belgium, Luxembourg, sleeping on board the trains in general, but only during the nights when there was nothing to see. The Rhein is magnificent, and that is all I can say about it for I only look at it from the window of the train.

I slept in the Frankfurt am Main Station, at a police station in Denmark. Then I gave myself a change and try sleeping in a train, only to find myself waking up in Sweden. I still have not fully woken up when I met a guy. I nearly quarrelled with him because of his unfriendly look.

But it turned out that was only because he thought I was from Japan and probably very rich. And I can tell you no one was then (1989) richer than the Swedish except (perhaps a few) Japanese. Oh! them and the Queen, you know which queen I am talking about. But I told him I was from Daiï, and suddenly we became friends. He said that I must be very poor, and I was not offended for in fact I am very poor.

He was like a child. We all are, like a child I mean. So like children we visited his mother in his home town by a beautiful lake. This home of his where his mother lived overlooks the lake. I ate the most delicious biscuits I had ever eaten at his home, made by his mother. He must have been worried lest I ate all his biscuits, for we are soon off again.

He took me to the pizza in the cold outside by the road, like they do in the Wild West. You may be interested to know that while *krone* is the currency of Norway and Denmark, that of Sweden and Iceland is *krona*. I never asked him who was going to pay for the pizza (because it was him who took me away from the biscuits, remember?). And he never said he would treat me to the pizza, but we both knew that I had no money, no kronas anyhow, and somebody has to pay for the food.

The country around us was very hilly. We went to his farm house, or rather *their* farm house because he lives and works in Stockholm.

We watched a concert in a shop's opening ceremony. It was a ceremony even though there were not ten people attending it. The town is that small, and everyone knows everyone here. The fiddle made it very homely and I nearly cried, but for you my dear.

Now, did the pizza come before or *after* the concert, that *is* the question. Anyhow it was not that but the beer which I drank that put me to sleep inside the warm train. Never forget to take off your jacket (I was going to say clothes, forgive me) on the train in a cold country, because while the train's heater is the regulator of the car's temperature it is you who are the regulator of your own body's temperature.

To cut things short, I missed my station. So carried on to the Ofotel (I keep thinking it was Otofel) line across to Norway. Beautiful! 'It is all snowy and white and black are the only two colours', you might have said. But, Oh! dear this was romantic. And I *thought* that was what you were.

I hitchhiked down the coast of Norway, firstly in a pick-up truck to the people inside which we talked about China's Tiananmen, then in an old lady's car whose driving was so exciting together with the winding road and the steep cliffs I am glad when it was over.

Driving she talked with gestures and turned to look at me, fiords, Norway's five fiords or five fingers, sang national anthems, Daiï first by me then Norway's, she remembered the king of Daiï's visit to Norway right after his coronation, she thought he was very handsome more so than locals, got some coins I am not yet homeless, and I am no mad man, but I am a nomad man. Do you copy? You know I will only change for you dear, into anything.

But we are in our dream, for life is but a dream. So if we dream tonight that would be the dream of a dream, and if in our dream we happen to be dreaming, that is yet a dream within the dream of a dream. You can go on and on in this manner, and of course there is a limit to sanity!

Hungary! As I have told you before that I had applied for traineeships with AIESEC, Daiï, and got accepted. In the summer holiday of 1990 while I was during my fourth year at the university I decided to go to Hungary for the training. Because I had to study one more year since I was both trying to finish a degree in Mineral Engineering and at the same time trying to take as many subjects in Electrical Engineering as possible as a step toward a hopefully second degree in Electrical Engineering, I had to ask for a short four-month training instead of the offered two-year one.

My job was supposed to be that of a programmer at 10,000 forints, which was approximately 100 US dollars a month, as the Forint was at that time approximately at the same value as the Yen was except that one was not even a hard currency while the other was rock solid.

As about how I managed to get through the procedure of applying with AIESEC, first we had an English Exam which followed what the IELTS was and thus was considered difficult, even more difficult than the TOEFL organised every few months by the Americans, or at least that was what the general feeling was anyway.

I represented as an applicant from an open university, and thus stood a mea-

gre chance in passing even that first round. I came out first, surpassing applicants from all other more prestigious universities. That would not have been a surprise if everyone had known that I was studying at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University myself.

My double roles of being a student at the best and the worst (in other people's standard, neither in God's nor mine) universities at the same time had at times led to interesting situations such as this one, and even to dilemmas sometimes. Fortunately there was no AIESEC club at Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University in 1990 since it had been closed down some years ago due to circumstances unknown to me, so I did not have to compete with any of my colleagues, or my juniors or my seniors.

Then there came an interview which was held one person at a time and in English. I had a feeling that the interview had not been necessary in my case since every one would like me to go anyway, if only because of the enormous efforts the AIESECers of RU had put in finding companies here who are willing to receive trainees from abroad. Automatically applicants from RU should have had the largest share of all the quotas of traineeships available, but since its students could rarely pass the first round of the multiple-choice exam it nearly always get the least.

In other words, had I not made it through the interviewing every one would surely have questioned the interviewers, 'Are you nut? What the matter was wrong with Kit?' and so on.

After having passed the written and oral exams there was only matching left, where applicants were matched with suitable companies from the then 72 countries all over the world. I got matched to a company in Budapest to work as a programmer.

That was in 1988 and Hungary was still a communist country. Not wanting to go to what was then called an Eastern Block country, which meant a communist country in Eastern Europe, I decided to go to England for my job training in 1989 after having postponed my schedule with AIESEC until the following year.

When next year actually came, Hungary had suddenly became a democratic country. So I decided that I would like to go there as a trainee with AIESEC.

When at last came the summer of 1990 which was my fourth and supposedly last year at the university, I found out that I had still one more year of study to go before I could graduate as a Mineral Engineer. Therefore I had to shorten my two and a half year plan to four months in order to just fit the traineeships into one summer vacation, much the same as when I went to England the previous year. The only difference was that, unlike in 1989, this time I told my parents where I was going to be during the summer holidays.

No, the reason I did this was not repentance, but simply because I had somehow upset everybody in my family last year when no one knew where

I was and they had not heard from me at all during the net period of four months. And I was asked never to do that again. Anyway, I am no nuts so I should know by myself that there is no future in doing this kind of thing twice. And I did not want to be tied down to my bed if it ever came to that.

This time I bought a return ticket from a travel agency which said I was going to fly the Polish Air since the price was the lowest. Price has always been a major concern to me. It was especially so then when I was still a student. So I finished my last exam of that year, had about two days in order to pack my things, and then off I went to Warsaw for a transit and then to Budapest my destination.

When I arrived I was welcomed by two AIESECers there. One of them was Szitzo, a plumb girl with a huge pair of breasts with very likeable manner who was going to be my personal counsellor during my time in Budapest, or so I was told.

They took me by car to the apartment where I was going to live. I lived in an apartment where we, on the very first evening that I arrived, went out at once, to a party. I never liked parties you see. But now I live for one and it all began from my time here in Budapest. Rob from Canada, Timo West Germany, Tanya from Australia, they are all great folks, that is only if you compare them with me of course. Before the German Reunification it was, and I was then 23 or 24, so you know now how old I am.

We have AIESEC meetings (what else would you expect, I am an AIESEC trainee) and study tours. One of the conferences we had was at a hotel, which was closed to all other guests apart from us. There I drank lots of vodka and tried the hungarian dances. It is only a pity (or a pity only?) that for the former I now forget everything about the latter.

One public telephone at the hotel was out of order in such a way that you may make a call absolutely free of charge. I called people in Daiï at three in the morning, which is eight or nine in Daiï. I phoned home and then to a friend, who did not believe that I was calling from Europe. 'You are kidding!', she said.

We stayed at the hotel. There were plenty of rooms for us to freely choose from. The building has around 5 to 6 floors.

When I woke up at nine in the morning to go to work I had to climb the windows of the third or fourth floor. These German guys whom I politely asked to keep their voice low the previous night had locked the door from the outside. They did not want me to be able to go to work even if I could get some sleep among the din they made.

I always sought a room with windows opening towards the East. Last night before going to bed I was fuzzy swapping rooms.

Szentendre is at the bend of the Donau (Danube) north of Budapest. Bu-

dapest is divided into three parts, namely Buda, Old Buda and Pest. Buda is hilly with underground caves, forest and castles. Rich families and those in the Party live there.

The caves are wide and have many tiers. You only climb down to certain levels. There are shafts of bottomless pit with the frightening darkness when you peer down into them. Parts of these caves were used for prisoners in the past. These could have been political prisoners. Here are on display torturing tools, for example there are several cages to put a person into, one with spikes inside, another dipped down a water hole, and yet another so small.

We did some orienteering, when we walked far and wide, to the castle for instance. I sang songs together with four or five friends in the street, at the square where the British Council is. People gave us money which they put in the hat which we put down in front of us. This is a part of the orienteering. It is like a Herculean task.

We swam at pools which are outdoor. One of these are on an island in the middle of Donau. We walked there across a bridge on one cold day. The pool has an elongated shape and is very long, more than a hundred metres, more likely 150, I would say. For I kept swimming on and on but never reach the other side. In the end this happened. Then I walked over to a lawn, and there lay myself down in the sun.

We also went to wine cellars. Once in one of these we drank warm wine served in litre-flasks. Some musicians were playing the dulcimer, violin, and viola.

Outside the place was a carousel which we went on when we first arrived at this place. Somebody there who had the key let us play on it for a while even though the fun ground was closed. The wobbling disc revolved so fast that it was so scary.

We sang songs and played games and puzzles over the table. These we challenged each other over our, and then other tables gave us several more to solve. I managed to solve a few of them, and thereby a few others were passed on to me which I also solved.

Then people stood up and drank to my health. Before they did that, they sang in resounding voices the song the favourite of us which says nothing apart from 'Bravo!' and 'Bravissimo!' Let α be the former while β the latter, then the words of song we sang is, $4\alpha\beta\alpha\beta\alpha\beta 4\alpha\beta$.

You may stop looking at the moon now. I have given up looking at it since who know when. Why? Because I never found you there. Telepathy only works if you know how to turn it on at the same time. Myself, I shall never know how to work these gadgets, technologies are never for me (though I am for them). Is it not called sympathy? I keep forgetting things, the memory is failing me. Oh, my health be no good as usual but I still remember you.

The meanderings of the *Càobrayạ* River are simply baffling. Looking at the map it is a wonder that no one has tried to put a bypass in at Brapradạ́eng and thus shorten it there by more than 30 times. Should this be done, however, the port at Glaungtoeï would soon find itself without enough water to run a paper boat, and that would never do. This is probably the reason for having no such bypasses.

One could also notice that whenever there had been a bypass of the river it was always done in such a manner that the island thus formed lay on the western side of the new course of the river, never on the eastern one. The Kreḍ Island in Nondḅurị is another one of such examples. I wonder whether this could be the result of some superstition.

During the *Ȧyudhyạ* Period when Bạngkauk was an agricultural area which was nearly completely surrounded by such a bend. Ironically the place where Bạngkauk is now is not Bạngkauk but on the opposite bank of the river to the east of it.

The place where *Tạksin* the Great built his new capital was in Bạngkauk, and in theory should have been completely surrounded by existing body of water, the Cào Brayạ River on the right and the old course of that river elsewhere. But the latter by then had dried up considerably, and on that side lay the Burmese. It is a matter of course that one should distant himself from a roguish neighbour, and that is essentially what Rama I did for he moved the capital to the eastern side of the river and thereby put it between himself and the direction of Burma. The *Khmẹr* on our back never attacked us.

It is generally assumed that the history of Daiï includes the Sukhṍdaï and the *Ȧyudhyạ* periods. In general we only know when kings reigned and when they died. The dates of birth of the kings are still lacking in Daiï history.

Ȧyudhyạ had 33 kings, namely

Ramadhiḅḍị I (*Ụ̆dạung*) who reigned during 1350–1369,
Rạmẹśoar 1369–1370 and 1388–1395,
Rạjạdhirạj I (Bngọ̀a) 1370–1388,
Daunglan 1388,
Rạmrạjạ 1395–1409,
Indrạdhirạj 1409–1424,
Rạjạdhirạj II (Sạm Brayạ) 1424–1448,
Trailo̧knạth 1448–1488,
Rạjạdhirạj III 1488–1491,
Rạmạdhiḅḍị II 1491–1529,
Rạjạdhirạj IV (Nhặu Buddhạngkụr) 1529–1533,
Raṣḍ́ạdhirạj 1533–1534,
Jaïrạjạdhirạj 1534–1546,
Yaudfạ̄ or Kàeöfạ̄ 1546–1548,
Màhạcakrbarrḍ́i 1548–1568,

Mȧhinddhạdhirạj 1568–1569,
Mȧhạdharrmrạjạ 1569–1590,
Nrẹśoar the Great 1590–1605,
Ẹkạdośroth 1605–1610,
Śrịsaovbhạgẏ 1610,
Drongdharrm 1610–1628,
Jẹsṭhạdhirạj 1628–1629,
Ạdityȧvongśx 1629,
Prạsạddaung 1629–1656,
Cȧofạ̄jaiï 1656,
Śrịsudarrmrạjạ 1656,
Nạrạïṇ the Great a 1656–1688,
Bẹdrạjạ 1688–1703,
Sarrbejẏa VIII (Sụa) 1703–1708,
Dạ̄ïsra 1708–1732,
Bṛomkọś 1732–1758,
Udumbaur 1758, and
Ẹkdaś 1758–1767.

Jaiïrạjạdhirạj communicated with China and Portugal, so he dug (1534–37, others say 1522) the canal as the result of which the old course of the river which went around Bạngkauk is now reduced to the Bạngkauknāuï, Bạngkhunśrị (Jakbra) and Bạngkaukẏhặị (Bạnglhoang) canals.

At this time the roads in Bạngkauk do nothing apart from following the courses of the canals. For example, the Ặunnuj Road which follows the Pravẹśbụrịromẏa Canal, the Bejrbụrị and the Rạmgamḥạeng which follow the Sạensạeḅ Canal (built by Rama III in 1837), and the Vibḥạvdị Rangsit which follows the Prẹm Prajạkaur Canal (built by Rama V in 1870). The Prapạ Canal is the cleanest canal in Bạngkauk because its water is used for making the water supply of the city, hence the name. The Prajạjụ̀en Road follows it faithfully all the way on the west.

I prepare nothing when the subject is the English language, except perhaps on the last day before the exam. But I always either come out top of the class or get an A.

But I love the English Literature something or another of which I always read. I read apart from Shakespeare (1564–1616) Dickens (1812–1870) and Mark Twain (1835–1910).

You approach a book as you do a new puzzle. You recreate things that appeared in the mind of the writer and has happened again many times in the mind of other readers. Though it has been four centuries since Shakespeare lived, a part of his thought comes to life again in my mind while I read his works.

Once published, a book may have neither past, present, nor future. It is like

a line which runs along side and parallel to us in both time and space, waiting for us to tap into it and let our imagination experience what it contains.

Before sitting an exam in English I would read some literary works in order that my mind may think fluently in English not in Daiï. This method can be applied to other things too, for example to studying for an Engineering degree. Here you never tackle the theories until you have seen the problems, the same way that you look upon the grammar as the means not the end.

Less lucky than you I am, for I still have not discovered this. As a consequence of this, the results in my study plummet until my prospect looks as hopeless and impossible as no one could dare imagine.

There is a song which compares the tree Cạmcurị (*Samanea saman*) in the different seasons to the state of mind of the students during different period through out their study. First-year students are compared with this tree when it is at the peak of its beauty. Being pampered by their seniors and finding out many new things they are happy until the study gets tougher, the time of which is compared to the tree when its leaves are falling. The most difficult period is when the pods are falling, which is compared to a student whose study results have been so bad that the one to come will soon decide whether he will be able to to carry on with his study.

Another song is from the Daiï Navy. It is about the Pradử (*Pterocarpus indicus*), the tree the flowers of which are well known for their unusual blooming and falling characteristic. All its flowers is said to bloom together, and when the time comes they would fall together until no flowers are left on the tree. This characteristic makes people use them as a symbol of the navy. Here the crews go where and when goes their ship, and all are in trouble if it should sink.

This song is memorable to me because I heard it when I was about twelve, when my father took my sister *Nhăung* and me on a trip organised by the Royal Navy Society. We stayed at the naval base in Sathịḅ. I listened to all the songs of the navy that they played on the bus until I knew them well.

I also became used to sitting in my window seat on the bus so much that I had a strange feeling getting into my father's car after we had returned to *Jiangmhăị*, the same feeling it is, to what a sailor feels when he is back on land after having been at sea for months, except that it was no more than several days in this case.

Everyone in Bạngkauk is fed up with the traffic here. I have no ideas why they could not or would not build an underground train. There is this believe that the water-table here is high. But tunnels for trains have been built under channels all over the world where they must be under the water-table, so I do not know where the true trouble lies.

What makes it worse to me is that there are neither day-passes nor term-tickets on the bus, so you cannot get off the bus when the traffic comes to a

standstill because then you would need to buy another ticket if you were to get on another bus later. I always say to Ben that I long for the time when we have day-passes on the bus, and in 2002 this dream is to be realised.

On 30 December 1991 I contact Coignaud regarding the designers from France. I am now working at Loxley, a sales engineer who sells the circuit breakers Unelec. In the evening I meet *Mhặem* at the her dormitory in the Rama Hospital. There is a New Year party at Loxley this evening and we go there together.

I begin to study German at the Goethe Institut in Bạngkauk. On Thursday 2nd January 1992 I go to the Institut on the *zauï* Arrthkạrprasiddh to apply, and on Saturday 11th January my first lesson starts.

We meet PODC people quite often. We go together the Pata department store at Pĭnklào on Monday 6th January for a dinner at the Suki Deluxe. I also make quotations of our products to both Vaurcakr and TEP, and we get in touch with both Roncelli and Bouygues-Thai.

Get visits people at these companies regularly because it is his responsibility to entertain the customers. I only do quotations. I do not yet know much about the working of circuit breakers and the design of an electrical power system. Practical Engineering sometimes make the cabinets for our breakers.

I use my degree in Mining Engineering to work here, and I am studying for another Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Engineering. There is an exam on Illumination in the morning of Monday 20th January.

I still study Computer Science at Rạmgaṃhạeng, the open university. On Saturday 25th January *Mhặem* and I go to Rayaung together and on Friday 31st I have to hand in an Assembly language assignment.

By March 1992 I have already begun my study of the French language at the l'Alliance Française on Sạdhaurtàị Road, Bạngkauk. My classmate here, Ṭhitinạth, was born on 23rd March and we are going to celebrate it somewhere a week later than the actual date.

I still sell the Unelec circuit breaker, and we have one project in our hand for Bận Soanbejr waiting for delivery.

I have applied again for AIESEC traineeships, and again they will offer me a place to go to Hungary, this time for one and a half year. But I decline the opportunity and will come to regret it afterwards.

I also apply for a Youth Ship programme which is a programme for East-Asian countries. Each year the programme puts university students from various countries together on a ship and sails them to all the member countries, stopping at each one to promote peace and foster relationship. My application, however, comes to nothing.

On Saturday 20^{th} June 1992 we have a party again at the house of Coeď

who is my senior both from Montfort College and here at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University, or Chulalongkorn in a typical spelling for that matter. He is now teaching Chemical Engineering at CU. This party is held annually for everyone who is both related to MC and CU.

Every year there is plenty of food and drink. Half of the men stay overnight. Half way into the party somebody sees the girls home because it is getting late. We carry on drinking, watch the videos, listen to music, or sleep in his room which is air-conditioned. The house is built of wood with a part of it over a large pond where fishes are bred for food. During the night if someone wants to throw up he can just open a lid in the wall, stick his head out and do it into the pond below. The fish will eat all that and later they too will be eaten.

This is just what I do tonight. It has been two years since I lived in Budapest. Also this is Daiï where it is hot and humid, and what I drink is no vodka but whisky, and mixed with some carbonated drinks at that. This makes one get drunk easier.

The following day is Sunday 21st and there is an Environment-related exhibition at the Queen Sirikit Convent Centre.

In July I could meet *Mọ* and *Dẹ̄ng* the latter of whom I have not seen for many years, that is since we both entered university.

This is my year again the second time in a row, I have passed all the requirement for the BS at RU and have graduated since 15 May 1992. I know this on 13 August, but have pre-registered for the next term since 27 July just in case I did not graduate. It has taken me a long time, that is since 24 June 1985 when I first began studying at the university.

August is really an exam month. I have two on Friday 14th, namely one for Power System I and another one for Control System Analysis II. The following day, that is Saturday 15th, I have an exam for German at the Goethe Institut.

In Engineering we have apart from lectures laboratories for the various subjects. For these we have to write reports. The idea is for us to have a hand-on practice in what we have previously learnt in theory, and to be able to analyse the real results.

But everyone and every group look at the reports written by students of the previous year. Some of us copy these verbatim, others do it more nobly but in essence still follow them. There is nothing one can do about this. One either does it to get an A, or write one's own reports and make do with a D.

This term I have three labs to do, namely Control System, the Energy Conversion I and Power System II. In September I have all the exams, that is to say, the Control System II on the 22nd and the Power System II on the 29th. On 19th September alone I have exams for the Control System Lab, Energy Conversion I Lab, and the oral exam at the l'Alliance Française.

There is another exam for the lab, that is the one for Electronic Device which is on 1st October. On the same day I move within the company from the Engineering Instruments Sales Section to the Business Development Department. My new job is to bid for the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Waste Water Treatment projects, the overall value at this stage of which is approximately 5 billion *ḅaḍ*s.

In October my French class resumes on the 3rd, I have a final exam for Microprocessor on the 6th and a Test of English as a Foreign Language on the 24th.

Nudį́, Ron's secretary and my colleague, has lent me books for the TOEFL test, but I have been too busy with all the exams already mentioned to be able to read them.

Moreover, my new position means a busier one and I have to examine all the quotations from manufacturers and dealers from all over the world. Our facsimile machine never stops, not even during the night. Every morning we find a long ribbon of the faxes that have come from overseas lying on the floor waiting for us. This is not to mention all the local dealers that we come into touch, as well as small shops that we need to look around our office in the Chinatown for things like a few trolleys.

I take the TOEFL test to help me in my profession, not to get into a university, but the results that come out are quite all right for I get a score of 647. The result for the Test of Written English where I have misjudged the time and failed to complete also is not so bad as I thought, I got 4 out of 6.

To obtain the scaled total score of TOEFL, the first step is to add together the scores of all the three sections. The second step is then to divide the sum by three, and then multiply the result obtained by ten. For example, my score for the first section was 59, for the second 68, and for the third 67. To turn this into the official score normally quoted, divide by three and then multiply by ten to obtain 647, or to be exact 646.66...rounded to the nearest integer.

As another example, the total score for the exam I took was 65 for the first section, 68 for the second, and 67 for the third and last. Adding this up you get 200. Then according to the second step above you obtain 666.66666... *ad infinitum*. This has to be rounded into the nearest integer, that is 667. This I have to work out by myself because the organiser of the TOEFL does not make known the way they calculate the scores.

On 1st November 1991 I begin my Japanese class.

What a bad day to commence writing my first page of diary, Wednesday 30^{th} March 1994 . I really want to write everyday if I have time to. I expect it to be a relaxing activity to do. After all these failures in my life I feel like refreshing myself up a little bit and find something to do.

But there is no need to panic, for I do not usually write a diary. This is something special already, and what is more half of it is lost in a flood. So to put it roughly you will only hear the first half of each day, that is the half the writing of which has not been dissolved in the water.

Today I wake up to my CD player as usual. I take my bicycle to work and do not come home for lunch, which is unusual. It gets cloudy just before noon but never rains as far as I know. After my Chinese class in the evening I eat at the dormitory of CU, then go to meet my parents at my sister's place. My father still drives the small Daihatsu van.

The result of the exam to study the MBA programme at Darrmśạstṙ has come out, and I have not passed. It is true there is no such thing as a free lunch. I had better not pass the exam than do pass it and find myself studying very hard, only to become like some of the people whom I know who are studying or have studied there, to mention but a few Suṛẏa and Denky.

Oh! not that I have anything against them. I think they are nice folks. It is just that I think they are a little peculiar. I will never go so far as to say that I think they are inhuman in a way. If they are smart, well-organised, and perfect, then I guess that I may be nothing but object-oriented. I am neither clever, I must admit, nor am I good at anything at all, as far as I can think of. I did not do well at the piano, did not get myself a UE from New Zealand, did not pass the Jiangmhāị University's medical faculty's entrance's test, failed to pass it again the following year, could not enter the medical faculty at CU, failed to get a place to study Electrical Engineering, had to study longer than others in Mineral Engineering, failed the Youth Ship Programme's tests four times, and so on.

> When the step ahead seems all to me too far,
> When the gap that divides is that one of the farthest star,
> I have never doubt the value of the few good things that I have learnt
> and never think that I should regret the misfortune.
> For the few good experiences I have seen
> are more important than the money I have earned.

I will come to like, in nine years' time, the number 4, because it is the quickest way to draw a cross without lifting your pen. Christ dies so that directly reach God we may.

Thursday 31^{st} March 1994 I bring lunch with me to the office of Telecom Asia, and find out that it is such a good thing to do. There are very few people around during lunch time and it makes me feel on air. The office is not cramped with people from three or four companies. Some faces of the people whom I consider bad are also not around.

In the Telecom Asia office on the 17^{th} Floor where I am working now there

are also employees of Anderson, Sinobrit and system programmers who are from Malaysia. In the afternoon after work I go to the office of the Polygram Design to pick up an IEEE Computer Society Letter. I walk back to TA office and meet Somjạï with this colleague. We talk at a small food shop nearby. At the Fortune Town I meet Nāṃ. He has been fired recently.

In Master of Business Administration you study among other things Micro- and Macro Economics, Accounting, Finances, Management and how to manage portfolios. All these profits, how to deal with people, how to close a sale and how to make something sound convincing without regards of what it really is. It is fine if you are a businessman by nature or experience and deal with your friends and the people you know for maximum profits for oneself. But when it comes to studying these things for a master degree or higher, it is a most wicked thing one can possible do to his fellow men. He who does it intends harm and has no well intentions for other people. I am not exaggerating.

At this moment I am trying to read Mark Twains, higher mathematics, for example Real Analysis and Functional Analysis, languages, for example Chinese, Russian, Japanese, French, German, all the subjects mentioned in the last paragraph, and others. I wish I could produce something concrete and tangible out of what I have read too. Astronomy and music are the two things I used to love. I would like to start it all again.

Friday 1st April, I take a sick leave and just go to the library at the American University Alumni. I think that it is a good thing to take sick leaves sometimes to have time for yourself.

At the library I read some newspapers. There seem to be no job advertisements on it that I like. Some require that you are an MBA graduate. Others require UNIX and ISO-9000 knowledge. I read some magazines, for example the National Geographics, Art Reviews, The Chronicles and Virtual Realities.

I have *klòaïdaud́* (deep-fried battered banana) and *khạ̀ömàodaud́* (fried and made from rice) for lunch and watch the exhibition to promote measures against a water crisis. Then I read some literature and some of the books on management. I am determined to study the various subjects by myself.

On Saturday I come to the British Council library only to find that it is closed. The security guard tells me that it will be open on the 5th April.

I go to the River City Hotel to have a look at the Handicraft Fair and at the room where they monthly hold the auction. These auctions are for the porcelain and antiques. In fact they are going to have one this afternoon at 1.30 pm. I do not think I want to see it, so I come back to the TA office and there read some newspapers.

Ben thinks that when you are an employer you are forever under the owner of the company, that is so long as you remain working with his company. 'No

matter whether you become a manager and have a salary of 100,000 ḅạds or more a month,' he used to say, 'The fact is that the company profits from what you do by the million'.

On Sunday I stay all day in my room, just sleeping, reading books, and watch the BBC and Star TV. There are a few interesting programme, for example the fashion show and a film about a werewolf teenage boy. I read some IEEE newsletters, books on finance, engineering and language. There are some documentary programmes on the BBC about drug abuses in the Great Britain. It is going from bad to worse. Many children use drug, even a child of only ten.

The video player is out of order again. I do not know what is wrong with it. I want to learn how to do everything myself, including repairing videos. I will learn how to design electrical and electronic appliances when I have the time.

I have begun to write and do things with my left hand instead of my right hand as I usually did. It is difficult. But who know, it might come in handy one day.

It is not Monday again already! My boss tells me in the morning that I will lower the morale of my colleagues by doing other things during working hours, 4th April 1994. I guess I have spoken too much again, as usual. I have told every one of my friends that I am trying to move to the engineering section. Now I find myself in an uneasy situation. What if they never let me move?

I do not want to work as a security officer anymore because there is nothing more that I could learn. I want to do some other things where I can grow as a person. As there is no place for me to move to within the company, I want to resign. It is never in my mind to behave badly in order to be fired and entitled to a three-month compensation package. It is not more money that I want but something more worthwhile to do. I may be stupid to resign before I can find a new job, but anyway I have made up my mind.

I hand in the resignation letter and say that I will carry on doing the job as usual in the mean time. In my heart I know full well that I will have to be without a job for a while yet. To make things worse, this is also a summer holiday and the time when new graduates are looking for job.

I take Tuesday off to look for a job. I may have to do with a non-engineering one as far as I could tell. In the morning I ask at NECTEC about the result of my earlier application. I apply to Sạengpradịṣṭḥ and Jasmine.

I feel that I had been through many bad managements, for example Suriẏa, Bidakṣ, Vijaov̇ and Ronald. I never think that it could have been me all the while who are rebellious.

I am determined, if ever I could come to be in the management, that I

will be more compassionate than they are. People are more important than money. Some managers only save their own skin and never think about other people. Yet some have bad manner and no good quality whatever. I also go to the Lhaksī Tower to inquire after a job.

At the Polygram Design office there is one letter for me. Ad, Croeñ and Ḍẹj are here. Ḍẹj drives me to Cuk's house. We meet among other people there Ben, Cuk, Ḍuc and A. Ben suggests that we go to the Dream World together tomorrow. No one can come, Cuk has two students to teach.

Then we leave for Daḅ Lẹn. I stay at the same room that I used to say, writing up until 1.30 am before going to bed. There are many interesting books in the room where I sleep. For example, music books and scores, the Lord of the Ring, Dictionary of Music and the Book on Friendship from Charlotte, an American whom I met a few years ago.

I wake up with Ben calling on the phone, Wednesday 6$^{\text{th}}$ April. It is a holiday today, the Cakrị Day. We break our fast and then go out to the Dream World in his Mercedez. We pick up Sun at her place, which is not a kilometre away. They are building something in front of her house, and she complains. Ben says that he want to fight for her on this matter, and that he enjoys doing something like this. He could not possibly have meant it, for he never is serious unless a thing affects him in some way.

We go by the express way. The Dream World is by Glaung Sạm in the northern part of Ḅạngkauk. We arrive there around 9.30 am, but the opening time turns out to be 10.30. Ben pays for our tickets. This is a treat for his nephew Tavan, Croeñ's son. We get inside, walk a little, and then wait while Ben and Tavan go together on the Hanging Coaster.

It is a good experience to come here only because we are with Ben. I would probably not want to come here on my own. I think the quality of things here is somewhat mediocre.

It is hot when we come back. We drop Ḍẹj at the Central Plaza Hotel. He is going to Lạḍkraḅang. Ben drops me off at the Robinson department store, Sukhumvid, to buy food for the party. He gives each Sun and me 100 *ḅạd*s each. I buy *kăi dauḍ́* (deep-fried chicken), *tàohù dauḍ́* (fried bean-curd), *phuak dauḍ́* (deep-fried taro), *thŭaḍ́ạeng dauḍ́* (deep-fried kidney-bean), *kraḅaung dauḍ́* (deep-fried battered wax gourd) and *daudḿan plạkrạ̈i* (deep-fried spotted featherback, a freshwater fish).

Then I walk to Cuk's place where people are singing and rehearsing. Here I prepare the food by arranging them into plates. Then I leave the place. The day has been long, but it has been a nice day. I am glad to be able to get out of my clothes to have a hot shower at the end of it. The Bangkok Music Society are going to Singapore on the 9$^{\text{th}}$ of this month. They are going to watch the *Les Misérables* there. Then they will go further to Australia and will come back on 17$^{\text{th}}$ April.

Today, Thursday 7th April, I contact Mhụ of Thai Syndicate Financial about the 300 units of TA stock that belong to Pūk. I manage to buy them but at a high price. The value of the stock is going up. I buy them for the port of of Yaovlakṣṇ whose sister, Koḅ, is working at Sinobrit as a secretary of Ḅang-aur who is the data centre manager there. The stock turns out to be a sham. In 1997 we have a financial crisis, and thereafter their value drops so low you would never believe.

In the afternoon I think it is Añjlị on the 21st floor who phones. I come up and talk with her about the new person who will work in the security section. Later Jollḍạ or *Ọ́* comes down to the 17th floor and I teach her Security Systems. She went to the US after having finished her M3. There she studied in secondary school, then did a bachelor degree in Computer Science and after that an MBA. She lived in Connecticut. I try to teach her everything possible in the limited time. Both her and Pūk become a successful security officer and remain with the company for many years.

I go to Bouygues-Thai on Friday 8th April 1994 to apply for a job. It is at *Muangdaung Dhạnị*. I go there by bus and take a motorcycle into the office. While waiting for it to open again in the afternoon, I eat my sandwiches near a big lake there. It is very hot. There is some fishing going on at the residence area near the office.

There are already many buildings here. High buildings stand in rows. But unlike those I had seen in Budapest, these are beautiful. They are designed and constructed by Western-European companies, and look more like some works of art than a mere building. After having written the application form, I walk back to the main road and catch a bus to go to the Ctucakr Park. Next, I apply at UCOM.

The next day, 9th April, I meet Koḅ by appointment at about 11 am at the Fortune Town to hand her the cheque for the TA stock I bought. She then gives me a lift to the World Trade Centre where I apply for an electrical engineering position. After that I go to the British Council library.

I am at CU in the evening. There is no one in the room of the Electrical Engineering Club except Rick and Śakḍxi. We talk for a while, and I teach both English through my talk. We dine at the university's dormitory, and then Rick gives me a lift home.

I want to know more about the English language. There are many more things to learn, read and teach. I want to write books. It is better to do so when you are not working, and I will start planning to write some books now. Writing is self-studying. You read, then you write some of the material down, turn them over in your mind, and then write your own book. There is also this problem about copyrights, and you need to protect yourself lest you cannot use your own ideas later without quoting somebody else's name.

Sunday 10th April, I come to CU hoping that there will be someone at the

fencing club, but disappointed when I find that there is nobody here. So I cannot *goang blaung* (spin the sticks) like I did here yesterday. After having waited here a little, I go back and spend some time at the TA office.

Then I go to the apartment at the Śirirạj Hospital to fetch some of the things that I need, which include the books that I will use to teach *Ọ́*. On my way back I meet *Yhị* whom I have not seen for such a long time.

We talk and he tells me that Ace has now a child of nearly one. What a good news to hear. I do hope that she wrote to me sometimes. Life is so short. Why can we not talk to each other. I have done my best when I told her that I wanted to marry her but she has chosen her own way, which is fair enough. But I love her and shall never be angry with her, so why this absolute silence on her part I never could understand.

I give my home address to *Yhị* in case he sees her again and in case she has somehow lost my address. He is travelling to China, and after that to Singapore.

How did you come to leave me
I will never know.
Your love for me you let me see,
Tenderness for me you show.

I only know that I love you
And I will do it I think always.
It make no difference what you think or do
You are now far, far away.

That is not all of it, but the rest is dissolved, so this is your day and not mine.

On 11 April 1994 I take a leave again when I go to the Thai Com satellite station to apply for a job. I talk with Choen, my junior at RU where she majored in English at the Humanity Department. I meet Ẹk who is from EE'73, CU, in front of the satellite station. Then I come to MBK to apply at Ẹkjạti on the 11$^{\text{th}}$ Floor. After all this I sit down to do my homework at the Fine Art Department, and then go to my Chinese class.

To a Daiï who lives in Bạngkauk the sea comprises three different places, that is to say, the part of the coast along Gulf of Daiï southeast of the city, the same from southwest of the city all the way down south until one reaches the border with Malaysia, and the third and last that part of the coast along the Andaman sea on the left-hand side of the peninsula.

The land bordering the mouth of *Càobrayạ* River south of Bạngkauk is sprawled with prawn farms. These have concrete tanks in which prawns are bred and raised. The male and female prawns are put together in a tank for

the breeding. After the latter have done laying eggs they and the males are taken away, otherwise they will devour up all the young prawns.

Once these small prawns has grown up to a reasonable size, they are transfered to a pond where *plạjàun*s (silver sillago) are also raised. The two are kept in the same pond for the purpose of recycling the water, so that the pond needs no cleaning. But they must be kept separated from each other by nylon nets to prevent the fish from the prawns. This done, prawns are ready to be sold when they are seven months old.

There is a market at Pạknāṃ in Smudprạkạr where one can buy all the ingredients to make sea dishes like *pōtạek*, which is a sour and spicy soup made from several fish and other creatures from the sea.

The boat on which the seamen go out to catch sea fish is called the *Tangkẹ* boat. People whose backyard borders a canal often have a *yạu* for catching fish. It is a large square net the four corners of which are tied by a long string to the end of the pole which makes up a lever that can be lowered and raised in order to catch fish from the canal.

Fish farms, for example those which raises *slid*́s, cut grass and throw it into the ponds where the fish are. Lichens will form on the leaves, which will float up creating a bog and provide us with excellent food for the fish. The water must be regularly changed.

This is done with the help of *rahad*́*vid*́*nāṃ*, or simply *rahad*́, an irrigation conveyor belt, formerly wind-powered but now driven by a motor, which conveys water from one pond to another.

There are also crab farms, for example those at Sạkhlạ, Muang, Smudrprạkạr, respectively ward (*taṃḅol*), district (*aṃbhọe*) and province (*cangvhad*́). Here small crabs weighing between 0.3 and 1 kilogrammes are bought from the market and put in a pond.

Being fed with small fishes two times a day, with water changed daily, they are ready to be sold back to the market after 15 to 20 days. Instead of buying young crabs, baby crabs can be bred and raised.

The name of King Rama I or Buddhyaud́fā̱ (20 March 1736–1809) was Daungd́ùang. † During the reign of King *Tạksin* the Great a riot broke out when he became king on 6^{th} April 1782 . As for *Tạksin*, he was butchered I know not by whom. Those who did know either had not lived long enough to tell the tale or would not let on.

Rama I founded Krungdẹb (Bạngkauk) on 21 April 1782, this being the tenth of the first month according to the Daiï calendar, and moved the capital

† *cf Rattanakosin bicentennial. An illustrated book on historical events.* (Nhangsụe jud́ bhạb krung *Ratnàkọsindr̀* saung rāuï pị) Kurusapha Business Organisation (Ongġkạrgā̱ khaung Gurusbhạ) 1982.

here from Dhonḅuriị.

Ḅangkauk's full name is *Krungdẹbmȧhạnȧgaur ḅvaurratnȧkọsindṙ mȧhindrạyudhyạmȧhạd́ilokbhob nobratnrạjdhạniḅurịromỵa ud́omrạjniveśńmȧhạsthạn ȧmaurbimạn ȧvtạrsthit sakkdattiyȧviṣṇukarrmprasiddhi.* In the reign of King Rama IV the part *ḅvaurratnȧkọsindṙ* was changed into *ȧmaurratnȧkọsindṙ*.

Rama I restored in 1782 the Bọdhạrạm temple which was built since the *Ấyudhyạ* period, and has it renamed into the Jẹtubol Vimolmangglạvạs temple.

Rama III restored the temple and had the various lores of the country inscribe on marble slabs placed inside the temple, for example those on Buddhism, history of the temple, literature, medicine, proverbs, and traditions, so much so that it is known as the country's first university. Among these fields of learning is that of the tradition massage, of which the temple boasts the country's best.

Rama IV changed the name into the Jẹtubon Vimolmangglạrạm. But people call it the *Bọdhi* temple and it is generally known as his temple.

Instead of a moat the river *Càobrayạ* surrounds the royal palace and the inner city on the west while on the east of it is the Lhaud́ canal. The city is shaped like an oblong leaf.

Then another canal, that is the Ǫ̈ng-ặng or Ḅạnglaṃbhụ Canal, was dug to the east of this canal which surrounds the new Chinatown Saṃbeng, Saojingjậ (the Grand Swing Poles) and the *Brạhm*'s (Brahmin) temples. Both the canal and the new city wall and forts were built by around 5,000 Laos from Viangcandṅ. The Grand Palace was completed in 1785.

The Brakậeö Maurkot (Brabuddhmȧhạmṇịratnȧpṭimạkaur or the Emerald Buddha) is the Buddha image that was brought in 1769 to Dhonḅuriị from Viangcandṅ by Lhoang Yokraḅatr, who later became King Rama I. It was installed in the Śrịratnȧśạsd́ạrạm (or Brakậeö) Temple in 1783.

The Swinging Poles was used in the Trịyampvạï (Lǭjingjậ) Ceremony since 1784, to ask the Hindu gods to make the city sacred and secure.

Rama I canonised the Buddhist Scripture in 1789 and edited in 1804 the laws into the *Trạsạmd́oang* (*lit* three-stamp) Law, the three stamps being Ḅọakậeö, Gojsịḣ and Rạjsịḣ. He also wrote *Rạmkiarṫi*, *Niraś Dậd́indạeng* and *Inhao*.

Kọsạdhiḅd́ị or Braglang Hon lived during his reign who wrote the '*lilit*' *Byuhyạtrạbejrboang*, the '*ḅodmȧhọrị*' *Kạkị*, the *Kumạr and Madrị* '*kaṇḍa*' (part) of the '*rậyyạw*' *Mȧhạjạti, Rạjạdhiraj*, and *Sạmkōk*. The last one is the Chinese historical story *Sān Guó* or the Three Kingdoms which is the story of the three kingdoms, namely Wèi (220–265), Shǔ Hàn (221–263), and Wú (222–280).

In 1785 there was the *songgrạm kào dab* (nine-army war) when Paḍung, the king of Burma and son of King Ạlaungbrayạ who burnt Ạyuddhyạ, came to attack Sïạm with his nine armies of 144,000 men, and in 1786 the battles at Dạ̀ Ḍinḍạeng–Sạmsoḅ.

Both times it was Bṿaur Sursinghnạd (Bụñmạ, 1743–1803) who drove them back. He captured Pattạnị in the south and transferred the confiscated main cannon in a junk to be kept in Bạngkauk. It is now in front of the Ministry of Defence. He helped Kạvila, who was sent by Rama I to rule *Jiangmhăị* in the north, drive away the Burmese, and thereafter took the Sihingġ Buddha image back to Krungdẹb.

In 1787 Rama I laid siege on Dvạï, a town which belonged to the warmonger neighbour of Sïạm, Burma, but he came back without having captured that city. But Dvạï, Marid́ and Tanạ̈śrị presented themselves to Sïam in 1791.

In 1782 Ong Jiangsụe fled from the rebels in Saigon to Sïam. He escaped back to Cochin-China, defeated the rebels and installed himself as the Emperor Gialong of Vietnam.

Following the fall fo Saigon (Zàingàun) in 1782, a riot broke of in *Khmẹr*, whereby King Nạrạ̈ïṇrạjạ fled with his family to Sïạm. His son, Nak-ong-ẹng, was still ten. Rama I sent Abhaïbhụbẹśr to rule that country, and then in 1794 Nak-ong-ẹng who became King Nạrạ̈ïṇrạmạdhiḅḍị.

To rule Viangcandṅ he sent Nandsẹn, and then Indvongśx. After the latter died in 1804 he sends Ạnuvongśx.

Before he died he gave the throne to his son Bvaursthạnmonggol whose name was Chim (24 Feb. 1767–1824) the coronation ceremony of whom began seven days after his ascension to the throne and lasted for another seven days during the period of which no alcoholic drinks were to be sold.

In 1810 Paḍung attacked and captured many southern towns which were under Sïam, but was later driven back. After his death in 1819 his son Cingkụcạ came to power who made preparations in order to attack Sïam again but never did. Ỵoan (Vietnam) wanted to have the town Phaidmạś back and was granted.

Khmẹr became divided into two sides, one under King Udaiïrạjạ who sided with Vietnam and his brother Upyọrạj (*nak-ongġ* Sngoan) who sided with Sïam. Rama II sent to mediate between these two brothers Yomrạj, who burnt Bnombeñ, Krabonglhoang and Bạndạïbejr before returning with *nak-ongġ* Ḍòang, *nak-ongġ* Ĭm and *nak-ongġ* Sngoan. Vietnam sided with Khmẹr which thereafter estranged itself from Sïam.

Rama II canonised the Buddhist prayers and translated them into Daiï from Pali. He built the new town Nàgaurkhŭankhandh at Pạklad́ on the mouth of the *Càobrayạ* River, and added three more forts to the existing fourth which was built by Rama I. Manned by Mon migrants, the town was ruled

by Smingdạumạ after its completion in 1815.

Three white elephants were presented to the king, namely Svẹtr Kuñjaur from Bọdhisatv̀ in 1812, Svẹtr Aiïrạ from *Jiangmhăi*, and Svẹtr Kojlakṣṇ̀ from Nàn in 1817. The national flag of Sïam became a white elephant in a *cakr* (disc-shaped weapon) on red. It is used as the Elephant Jack in the royal trading ships.

In 1812 Rama II brought the Buṣyàratṅ from Caṃpạśakd́xi to Bạngkauk and installed it in the *uḅosoth* of Śrịratnàśạsd́ạram first, before moving it to the Surạlaiïbimạn Tower in the Cakrbarrd́ibimạn Palace.

In 1817 he started the annual ceremony for the Visạkhả day which falls on the full-moon day of the sixth lunar month, the day that marks Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death. Gialong died in 1819 and Minmang became the new emperor of Vietnam.

Rama II restored the Cạ̀eng Temple and renamed it the Àruṇrạjdhạram Temple, the name which remained in use until Rama IV's reign when it was changed into Àruṇrạjvrạram. This temple was in the royal ground during the time of King *Tạksin*, but it became the temple of Rama II because of the extensive restorative works carried out during his reign. The 82-metre high big *prạngġ* (Khmẹr-styled pagoda) we see now was planned towards the end of his reign and the foundation dug. It was built by Rama III and completed by Rama IV. The mould for the Buddha image here was done by King Rama II himself.

In 1820 Carlos Manuel de Silveira was sent by the Portuguese Governor of Macao to Sïam to build ships. An American businessman, Captain Hale, in 1821 came here and traded 500 guns with sugar. He was appointed Loang Bhakd́iṛạj *kaptan* (captain).

The following year John Crawfurd was sent here by the Marquess of Hastings who was the Governor General of India. For various reasons, for example his manner not being considered well enough, his navigational surveying of the rivers and, and this is perhaps the worst, the fact that two interpreters were used, that is one between English and Malay and the other Malay and Daiï, the negotiation proved a failure. They should have sent in his place a merchant!

Rama II likes literature and his reign marks the blooming period of this branch of art. He himself is an excellent poet who wrote among other things the *Inhao*, *Gạvị*, *Kraidaung*, *Rạmkiarti* and *Sangkẖdaung*. He also played the *zạusạmsạï* (three-stringed fiddle), and had composed songs for it among which are the *Ḅulhan Lauïlùan* or *Ḅulhan Lùanlauïfạ̄*, and the *Drongbrasuḅin* or *Sarrsroeñbracandṛ* song.

In a way his reign is like the Elizabethan English because Sundaurbhù (1787–1855, b. 26 June) is to a Daiï similar to what Shakespeare is to the English or Cervantes the Italians. He wrote *Bra Abhaïmṇị* in verses (*nidạn*

gaṃklaun), as usually is the case with all his other works. Khun Jāṇg–Khun Phạen was another masterpiece which he shares the credit of writing with Rama II and III. The reign of Rama II also produces the very fine quality *ḅẹ̃ncrongġ* (five-coloured china).

The Siamese twins were born in 1811 in Smudrsonggrạm whose side of the body is connected with the other's from chest to abdomen. A Scotch merchant bought them from their mother when they were 18, and put them on show in a circus in the US. Each married a different wife. Both settled and lived in the US until their death on 17 January 1874.

King Rama III (Nàngklào, 31 Mar. 1787–1851) came to the throne in 1824 after his father, Rama II, died from a serious illness that lasted for eight days. In the same year the United Kingdom sought the alliance from Sïam in their attack on Burma. Subsequently three troops were sent, namely those under Bibaḍhkọṣạ, Màhạyọdhạ and Surseṇạ. In 1825 envoy and presents were sent to the emperor of China.

On 16 December 1825, Captain Henry Burney, a British official at Penang who could speak Daiï, conversed with Rama III. Negotiations followed which resulted in the first treaty of friendship and commerce between Sïam and a European country, which was signed on 20 June 1826. It was made in four languages, that is English, Malay, Portuguese and Daiï.

Ȧnuvongśx of Laos rebelled against Ḅạngkauk's rule, which led to his death while in imprisonment following his loss in the battles of 1827. After that, Rama III ordered more forts to be built at Smudrprạkạr, namely Pịkkạ, Sụazàunleḅ, Trịbejr and Vijiarjọ́dok.

His brother, Prince Mongkuḍ́ or Càofā Mongkuḍ́ (18 Oct. 1804–1 Oct. 1868), was appointed the abbot of the Ḅvaurniveś́ Temple in 1837. He created a new sect of Buddhism, the Dharrmyutiknikạ̈.

Andrew Jackson, the president of the US, sent Edmund Roberts to negotiate a trade treaty. The Treaty of Amity and Commerce was concluded with no difficulty since the US demanded no extraterritorial rights. It was signed on 20 March 1832.

The trade between China and Sïam prospered in this reign, and Rama III built two pagodas sitting on top of a model of the trading junk in the Yạnnạvạ temple near the present Sạdhaur pier. Dan Beach Bradley, an American MD and member of the Protestant board of mission ABCFM, came to Sïam in 1836 to spread the Words. He brought with him the vaccines for cholera and smallpox, and the printing press which produced a book in Sïam for the first time on 3rd June 1836.

By 1839 Rama III was abreast with the technology, for he ordered the first governmental documents in Sïam, namely the 9,000 copies of the notice to prohibit the consuming of opium.

In 1841 Bradley started making moulds for their own types, and the first western calendar in Daiï was printed in force the following year. The first Daiï types ever made were designed in Burma, casted in India, and used for printing the book on the Daiï grammar by James Low † which was printed in Calcutta in 1828. The book had been written since 1822, but presumably had to wait for the types to be casted. That was time when we had the luxury of neither the computer nor Knuth's TEX.

The *Coḍmhaïhẹtu Yặng Sàn* or the *Bangkok Reader* which was started by Bradley in 1835 was short-lived and had to go out of print in less than one year because nobody read them. With an admirable perseverance he resume printing it again in 1864 under the same name, and this time it lasted over three years.

The monk Càofạ̄ Mongkuḍ, knowing his market better, set up his own printing press and operated it by monks of the Ḅvaurniveś Temple to produce the *paṭimọkkh*, the prayer verse previously etched into *nhangsụe ḅaịḷaṇ* (inscription on palm-leaves).

During the reign of Rama III, Càofạ̄ Mongkuḍ went from place to place on his *pèlerinage* when he discovered many historical things, for example the stone with the inscriptions made under King Rạmgaṃhạeng of Sukhọdaï and the monumental *Paṭhomcẹḍiỵa* pagoda.

One may well understand these pilgrimages to deserted places, since he was the brother of a different mother to the king and was next to the throne. And after the king died in 1851 he became King Rama IV, and is also known as King Mongkuḍ or Bra Caumklào.

He had been a monk 27 years, reigned another 18 and had 82 children. Fluent in Pali and knowing Latin and English well, he was perhaps the only King in Asia during his time who could keep correspondence in English with the kings and heads of state in the West. He was also an astronomer and could calculate the solar eclipse. On his coronation day on 15 May 1851 he showed his modern attitude because all the foreign representatives who came from Holland, England, Malaysia, Portugal and the US were standing on their feet instead of sitting on the floor like the Siamese. Upon his insistence, his brother Cuḍạmṇị became the second king of the kingdom who was crowned on 25 May 1851.

Pĭnklào employed a retired army officer from England, Thomas George Knox who came to Sïam in 1831, to train the palace soldiers. He translated a book on big guns' techniques into Daiï in 1804 and ordered Śrịsuriyàvongśx to build steamships.

Bra Caumklào sent envoys to present the emperor of China with gifts on 3rd July 1851, and the other and last time in 1852. He ordered an attack

† Could be *Lowe*, *Lowell*, *etc.*

on Jiangtung twice, once in 1852 and then the second and last time in 1855. After that there were to be no more battles with that country until it was taken by the British in 1885.

Sir John Bowring who was the Governor of Hongkong came to Sïam under Queen Victoria's command. He came in the ship *Rattler* and met Mongkuḍ on 16 April 1855 and Pĭnklào privately later. The Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between the United Kingdom and Sïam was signed two days later. In the same year decreed Mongkuḍ the picture of a white elephant, side-view and facing left, on a red background the national flag, and the name of the country became officially 'Siam'.

He visioned a god who has helped protect the country, and had Pradíṣṭḥ Vạurkạr make a mould and cast the image of this imagined deity in solid gold eight inches high, and give him the name of Bra Sïạmdẹvạdhirạj. Then he installed this golden god inside the *bradị̀nàng* (palace) Drongdharrm which was within the group of Buddhmondiar palaces. Later Rama V pulled down all these palaces and moved this god to the Bradị̀nàng Baiśạldakṣiṇ where it remains until this day.

Townsend Harris, who was the American Consul-General to Japan, came to Sïam on 21 April 1856 while Franklin Pierce was the president of the US. Again he met the first king first, and later the second. And again the negotiation succeeded and a treaty was signed on 29 May 1856 according to the terms of which the setting up of the American Consulate in Sïam had been decided. Stephen Mattoon became the first Consul who had lived in this country for close to ten years and spoke Daiï well.

Rama IV wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865, president of the US 1861–1865), offering to send over a pair of elephants to the US. But the timing was not the best, for it was then in the middle of the industrial revolution and his letter must have seemed untimely at the best and at the worst preposterous. He replied,

> I appreciate most highly Your Majesty's tender of good offices in forwarding to this Government a stock from which a supply of elephants might be raised on our own soil. This Government should not hesitate to avail itself of so generous an offer if the object was one which could be made practically useful in the present condition of the United States.
>
> Our political jurisdiction, however, does not reach a latitude so low as to farm the multiplication of the elephant, and steam on land as well as on water, has been our best and most efficient agent of transportation in internal commerce.

There was a time when steam was thought to be efficient.

In 1849 he bought a lithographic press from the US to print books on Buddhism, and in 1858 the coin-stamping machine made by Taylor, Birmingham, UK. The Royal Mint, *roṇgkraṣạpṇ̇* (mint) Siddhikạr. was completed and running in 1860. Before this the money used was in the form of *ngoen boddò̀ang* (silver bullet money) and *ngoen rhiañnok* (Mexican coins with the royal stamps on the back).

The first *rhiañkṣạpṇ̇* (minted coin) or *ngoenpạe* came out in 1860, which are one *ḅạd*, one *slueng*, two *slueng*, one *fūang*. In 1862 the cowries were replaced by tin coins, which are called *aṭh* and *sọ̀los*. Gold coins were stamped in 1863 which are called *Doś*, *Biś* and *Baśd́uengṡ*, and copper coins in 1865 called *Zịk* and *Sìaö*.

The *Rạjkiccạnuḅẹkṣạ* (royal gazette) newsletter was first printed in 1858 which lasted until this day. On 28 July 1857 Montrị Suriyàvongśxi, Sarrbẹdh Bhakd́ị and Mondiar Bidakṣ paid a homage to Queen Victoria. Rạjọdaï's *A Journey to London* was the first book to be copyrighted here. The French Bishop Pallegoix brought photography, after which Krasạpnkickọśol (Mhọd́ Àmạtyàkul) became the first photographer. The ancient ploughing ceremony *Bụejmonggol* was revived in 1858.

Napoléon III (Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, 1808–1873) sent M. de Montigny to Sïam in 1856. During 1859–1867 his troop captured the Cochin-China. Then Śrịbibaḍhṅ̀, Vaïvaurnạth and Ṇrongġvijit were sent as envoys to him in France. For this purpose a French warship picked them up on 22 March 1860 and brought them back some twenty months later, on 10 December 1861.

At this time there are no streets or roads. Foreign diplomats said that they missed their civilisation, and so comply with the request Rama IV did for he built the Croeñkrung Road in 1861. Outward bound from the second moat it was built by Śrịsuriyàvongśx and Indrạdhiḅd́ị from the Sạmyaud́ Gate to the Tok Road, while inward bound by Yomrạj (Gruḍ) and Bromhḅrirakṣ from the same to Snạmjaï in the inner city. Therefore this road runs a long stretch along the eastern banks of the *Càobrayạ* River, a truly lovely I would imagine at the time it was built. The Portugal Embassy is here, the first one as such in Sïam.

In 1863 another street was built, that is the Ḅaṃrungmuang Road from Snạmjaiï to the Swing Pole, and in 1864 another, the Fùangnàgaur Road from Sĭkāk Brayạśrị to the Swing Pole. These last two roads are not very long. The original purpose of these two roads was as an access to the Brahmin village and the Swing Pole.

The third moat was dug, the Phd́ung Krungkṣẹ̣m Canal. By 1980, more than a century after it was built, this canal had become polluted and stank so badly.that you would not have wanted to walk along it. During the 1990s, however, people became more environmental conscious, and by the turn of the millennium it had been so much cleaner that fish were coming back. Now

the canal has plenty of them and seems at long last like a decent canal

Pĭnklào had been chronically ill for five years and he died on 7th January 1865.

The British Borneo in 1864 began exporting the timber from the north. The logs were floated down the Ping River that merges with the Vang, Yom and Nàn to become the *Càobrayạ* which goes out to the sea at Smudrprạkạr, just south of Bạngkauk. My parents in *Jiangmhăị* still remember the time when the river was covered with the floating teak logs. Workers would run around on top of these, steering them. In 1866 Rama IV built a lighthouse at the mouth of the *Càobrayạ* River.

Khroa Inkhŏng (In), who was from Bạng Cạn, Bejrbụrị, was responsible for most of the mural paintings done during this reign, for example the *uḅọsoth* of the Bromnivạs, Bvaurniveś Vihạr and Śrị Ratnàśạsd́ạram temples in Bạngkauk, and that of the Màhạsmṇạcạr Temple, Bejrbụrị. His painting at this temple in Bejrbụrị shows the Pṭhom Cẹd́iẏa pagoda the restoration works of which began in 1853 and was completed during the reign of Rama VI. Some of his paintings also depict the imagined western world.

Buḍhạcạrẏa (*Tọ*, 17 Apr. 1788–22 Jun. 1872) was an important monk who is wise and much respected. He was also a great teacher, and many of his students passed the *priañ ẹk* (top-level exam for the monks in Pali translation). After his death the miniature Buddha images casted by him became prized collection items some of which are very highly priced to this day.

From his own calculation Rama IV concluded correctly that there would be a total eclipse of the sun on 18 August 1868 at Vhàkạu in Pracoaḅgịrịkhandh, and he invited Sir Harry Ord the Governor of Singapore to come and observe this rare natural occurrence with him. From 30 August until 23 September 1868 he was seriously ill from Malaria, and passed away on 1st October.

King Rama V (Màhạ Cuĺạlongkaurṇ, 20 Sep. 1853–23 Oct. 1910) had many wives. He had 77 children. He was 16 when he ascended the throne on 11 November 1868, and Bṛommàhạ Śrịsuriyàvongśx (Jòang Bunnạg) became the Regent until his second coronation ceremony on 16 October 1873.

The Rạjḅbidh was built in 1870 as the his royal temple. In the same year he visited Singapore and Java, and the following year India and Burma.

Starting off in 1868 as a unit of 24 *màhạd́lek* body-guards, the Royal Guard was developed into the much larger *Màhạd́lek Rạjvallobh Rakṣạbra-ongġ* which comprises squadrons and regiments, and equipped with modern weaponry.

In 1871 he founded the Màhạd́lek Officer School, which later became the Soankulhạḅ Palace School. One of his wives, Śrịbajrindrạ, founded the Rạjinị School in 1940. The Assumption College was founded in 1885 , the Joseph Convent College in 1907, and the Bạṃrungviją School in 1899.

The *staṇgġ* ($^1/_{100}$ of a *ḅạd*) was created as a new monetary unit the coin of which is made of copper and has a hole in the middle. The *aṭhkraḍạṣ* (banknotes) were also produced, but were soon discontinued until replaced by the *dhànḅatr* (banknotes), in 1902, which comes in five different denominations, namely 5, 10, 20, 100 and 1,000.

Màhiśr Rạjàhṛuedaï set up the Ḅugglabhẏa, a new commercial bank. It was later registered as a company, the Sïạm Kammạcol (Siam Commercial) Bank, in 1906, which became the Daiïbạṇijẏa in 1939.

Rama V abolished slavery gradually (1888–1908), thus causing no bloodshed.

The first telegraph line was kicked off in 1875 between Ḅạngkauk and the lighthouse at the *Càobrayạ* estuary in Smudprạkạr. In 1878 the second line was laid which connected Ḅạngkauk with Ḅạngpa-in and Ȧyudhyạ.

The first hospital to be set up by the government was the Vanglhang Hospital that borders the Ḅạngkauk *Nāuï* in Dhonḅuṛi (1886). Its name was later changed into 'Śiriṛaj' in remembrance of Śiriṛaj Kȧkudhbhaṇḍ, one of the king's son who died at the time of its construction. After the cremation, the king gave all the construction materials from the funeral pavilion to be used for building the hospital, which was opened on 26 April 1888.

Rama V was contemporary of Queen Victorian and the Industrial Revolution in the UK. Therefore he probably have seen the canals in Manchester and other cities in England at their best, for he created for his country in 1882 the Canal Department.

The furthermost part in the Gulf of Daiï is a bay shaped like a square the side of which is approximately 100 kilometres. The shore line on the far side of this bay has four estuaries, namely from left to right Mậe Klaung, Dậcịn, *Càobrayạ* and Nȧgaurnạyok (now Ḅạng Pakong). Between Mậeklaung and Dậcịn and moving inland are connected by two canals, namely Sunakhtaun and Ḍaṃnoensḍoak. Likewise between Dậcịn and *Càobrayạ* there are Màhạjaiïjolmạrk, Bhạṣịcroeñ, Màhạsvasḍxi, Brarạjạbhimol and Brayạḅarrṛụe; and between *Càobrayạ* and Nȧgaurnạyok are Saṃrọg, Pravęśṅḅuṛiromẏa, Sạensạeḅ and Rangsit.

The Postal Department was set up in 1883. The electricity was first used in 1880 by the army and, by the king's command, the palace. The Siam Electricity in 1898 became the sole supplier of the electricity in Ḅạngkauk.

Surśakḍxi Montṛi fought and defeated the Chinese Ḥậu who plundered the people in the north during 1885–1888.

The means of transportation at this point are the *kvian* (buffalo carts) in the country, the *rothlạk* (rickshaw) brought in from China, and the *rothmạ̄* (horse-drawn carriage) from the West. The word 'rickshaw' comes from the Japanese *jinrikusha* which means a man-powered carriage. The tram came in

1887. First the carriage was drawn by horses and then later it was electrically powered.

Rama V created the *Yuddhnạdhikạr* (defence) Department, and he became the *caumbol* (Field Marshal). Many of those who held this position later misused their power, whereby much bloodshed resulted until it was abolished in the late 20th century. As for the defence department, it later turned into the Klạhọm Ministry.

He also formed the Cadet School in 1887, which became the *Srạñromẏa* Military School and then later the Nạïrāuï Dȧhạrḅok School.

The Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign in 1887 saw Dẹvvongśxvrọp-kạr celebrating amidst all the British. Since 1885 he had become the first Minister of Foreign Affairs. In 1892 all the ministries numbered twelve in total and the provincial administration changed in such a way that the kingdom was divided into *monḍol* (prefecture), *cangvhaḍ́* (province), *aṃbhọe* (district), *taṃḅol* (ward), and *mhŭḅạ̀n* (village).

Daiï words never change when they become plural, therefore 'Taṃḅol' may be either singular or plural depending on the context, while its usual English equivalent, Tambon, may have its plural form, Tambons, though of course one may use instead for instance *Taṃḅol*s or Taṃḅol's. In 1891 the Department of Rạjlọhȧkic (metallurgy) and Bhụmividyạ (geography) was formed which later became Lọhȧkic and then Drabyạkaurdhaurṇị The first tin dredger in Sïam was operated by the company Dùnggạ Harbour with Edvard T Mile as its captain.

If we look at the reign of Rama IV (1851–1868) and that of Napoleon III (1852–1870), we will see that they coincide nearly perfectly with each other. In that era when both the industrial revolution and the democracy were in force while the dwindling number of the reigning monarchs has nearly reach the critical stage, those with the absolute power in their hands tend to be more compassionate to each other than earlier on in history. This follows from the simple rule of thumb of the inverse proportionality between the density and kindness. It is the same rule that makes people who live in the city seem so unkind to each other by the yard stick of country folks.

Moreover, Rama IV knew Latin, and that goes a long way towards winning the heart of any French, the French language being the direct descendant of the *Latin vulgaire* of the common people.

Rama V was less lucky than his father. For one thing, most of his reigning life (1868–1910) was contemporary with the Third Republique (1871–1940). Also, linguistically he must have been less able compared with his father, in the eye of the French at least. The closest person he could pair with among all the rulers of Europe was the probably the Nicolus II (1868–1918), the emperor of Russia (1894–1917). He visited Europe in 1897 and 1907 when he appeared in a picture together with Nicolus II, perhaps partly for the political

reason related to the problems of colonisation.

Free people who are poor could become desperate and dangerous, for example Germany after World War I when Hitler gained power, and Poland in 1990 when in Warsaw I was robbed of all my belongings. This was also the same with the French, for while they were suffering the economic depression during 1885 and 1899 their country won colonies in Africa and Asia. The democratisation process in Europe had been long and bloody, particularly in France.

Rama V had been so modern even before his visits to Europe, one would have thought that he had lived or graduated from the West. But he was an absolute monarch who had many wives, and so the troubled French people under the Third Republic took lands from the Kingdom of Sïam and demanded horrendous amounts of ransom. Those who take things which do not belong to them always use cunnings and devices and are always on the wrong, so there is no need to dwell on the details of the captures.

Western historians argue that these pieces of land obtained by force never historically belonged to Sïam. This to a certain degree was right, but it would have been equally so regarding any piece of land of whichever nation on earth if you go back into the history far enough, for example the Sïam following the fall of *Ayudhya* presumably was only Dhonburi. France used to belong to England which in turn used to belong to the Romans.

But to summarise, these lands ceded are namely Penang to the UK during 1786–1800 while the prime minster was William Pitt the Younger of Tory (1783–1801, and again 1804–06) during the time of George III who reigned 1760–1820; Dvai, Marid and Tanaosri to the UK in 1793; outer Khmer in 1867 to France under Napoleon III who was the president of the Second Republic from 1848 to 1852 and then the self-appointed emperor of France during 1852–1870; Sibsaung Cudaiï to France in 1888 when the president of France was Sadi-Carnot whose office was 1887–1894; the eastern side of the Khong River to France in 1893; the western side of the same river to the same in 1904 when the president was Émile Loubet whose office lasted 1899–1906; the Burba prefecture in 1907 also to the Third Republic when its president was now Armand Fallières whose office was 1906–1913; and Malayu in 1909 to the UK under H H Asquith of Liberal whose prime-ministerial office was 1908–16 and the monarch was Edward VII who reigned but not ruled during 1901–10. Ironically a gift from the people of Sïam to their king on his 40^{th} birthday was the statue of him sitting on the horse back, casted in, of all places, Paris. On 11 November 1908 the king unveiled his own monumental statue.

Rama V sent his son Vjiravudh to England to study in 1893. In 1894 the Crown Prince, Vjirunhis, became sick and died in Sïam. Vjiravudh became the new Crown Prince. In 1896 England agreed with France to let Sïam remain a buffer state and leave her alone.

Numerous bridges were built during the reign of Rama V, and he funded buildings one each year specifically for the celebration of his birthday. The title deeds of the land started in 1901, and the Daḅiandì́din (land registration) Office was established.

Raṣḍ́ạnupraḍ́iṣṭh introduced *yạngbạṛạ*, *Hevea brasiliensis*, from Malaysia to Trang. Rama V wrote many books among which are *Siḅsaung ḍ́uan* Royal Ceremony, *Klai ḅ̀ạn*, and *Ngau pặ* . The comet Halley came during 18 April until 16 May 1910. He died later on that year.

In many way Rama V has become like a god to many people. You see his portrait everywhere. I have no opinions regarding what is history because I do not wish to judge. All great kings since the 18th century think that democracy is best for the people. 'But not now,' they would say, 'after I am gone perhaps'.

Colonisation apart, this was not the first time the French had tried to do a monarch in. They had done it to themselves before, that is to their king Louis XVI. From the point of view of the royal family or a royalist they might be more dangerous than the English, because the latter still have their queen even now. They are pragmatists whereas the French are idealists.

Some think that it was wise of the king that we should have lost half of the country instead of becoming a colony. Others say that it should have been to either stand or fall together. *Humiliation*, however, is only recognised as being a virtue in Christianity not in Buddhism. The trouble is that Sïam's disintegration at that time made it impossible for Daiï to become whole again after the colonisation fad was over. But perhaps that is the way it should have been.

Ironically Rama V abolished the monarchy of Lā̀nnạ in the north while at the same time feared the abolition of his kingdom by the Third Republic of France. This is the thing we now see everywhere, however. Some vulgarly put it as the *pecking order*.

Sïam was caught between two fires. On the west was the English and on the east the French. With the king's status bearing the greatest part of the risk the former must have seemed to be more amiable between the two, the English seemed to be more monarch-friendly. But to submit to them would have meant the possibility, or even the likelihood, of getting into the same boat with the Burmese. And that, to a post-Ȧyudhyạ Siamese is certainly out of the question.

Rama VI (1 Jan. 1880–26 Nov. 1925) was educated in England between 1893 and 1901, that is to say, from the Royal Military Academy (founded 1799) near Sandhurst in the southern part of England, and then the Christchurch College, Oxford, from 1899. In 1911 there was a failed attempt made by a group of *Young Turks* to overthrow the monarchy. All those approximately 100 people arrested were forgiven and released on 11 November 1924.

The *Buddhśakraj* (Buddhist Era or BE) was adopted, starting from 1st April 1912, which replaced the *Ratnàkọsindrśok* The new era is 543 years before the *anno domini*.

The Branàgaur Library was founded on 6th January 1916 which later changed into the National Library and moved to the present place at the Vạsukrị Pier. The air postal service was started on 17 February 1919 between Bạngkauk and Candbụrị.

Sụapặ (wild tigers) was begun on 6th May 1911, and the same thing for women (tigresses) in 1920. The Boy Scouts started on 1st July 1909. It was created in England by Robert Baden-Powel in 1908. The building of the Snạmcandṛ Palace in Nàgaurpṭhom began in 1907.

On 2nd January 1912 the Vjirà Hospital was opened, and on 30 May 1914 the Culạ́longkaurṇ Hospital. Màhitlạdhibẹ́śr (d. 24 Sep. 1929) modernised the medical practices in Sïam. He studied at the Harvard University in the US.

Under the pseudonym of NMS, Rama VI wrote many books, for example *Knok Nàgaur*, *Lilit Sạm Krung*, and *Nidạn Vẹtạl*. He created the practice of having surnames in 1913, and coined the first surname, 'Sukhum', for Yomrạj (Pàn) who was entrusted with the founding of Thai Cement in 1913. The *Glang Ạumsin* (saving bank) was founded on 1st April 1913 in Bạngzùe.

The Orville Wright aeroplane was demonstrated in 1911, the first pilots trained and returned from France in 1913. The Aviation Section (*phnạek karbịn*) was set up in 1913. Nowadays this has become the Air Force. The *Dáunmuang* Airport was completed on 1st March 1914. The royal ground in Sathịb was given to the Navy on 16 September 1922 to be built into a naval base which so became in 1974. The first battleship, *Braròang*, was built and launched in 1920. It served the Navy until 19 June 1959. Telegraph stations were set up at Śạlạ́dạeng in Bạngkauk and in *Songkhlạ*.

The foundation of the *Bañjạkạr* (now Akṣaurśạstṛ) Building of the Kàrạjkạr Bolruan School was laid by Rama VI on 3rd January 1915. The school changed its status on 26 March 1916 into the first university, and then on 6th April 1917 obtained the new name of the Culạ́longkaurṇ (Chulalongkorn) University.

From 1st April 1916 it became illegal to gamble. Cooperation was begun by Bidyạlongkaurṇ, and the first co-operative was set up in Biṣṇulọk in 1916.

In 1917, on 28 September the present tri-colour flag replaced the elephant one as the national flag. From October to November 1917 Bạngkauk was flooded extensively for the first time.

On 22 July 1917 Rama VI decided to involve Sïam in the First World War three years into the fighting. On 19 June 1918 Bijaïjạñṛiddhi (later Dẹbhasḍin) and 1,200 volunteers went to Europe to help with fightings. They made it just in time for the victorial celebration in Paris on 14 July 1918,

which is the French National Day, when they were found marching through the Arc de Triomphe. All the soldiers, less 19, returned on 10 April 1919, received a medal from the king. The monument for those who died was erected near Snạmloang, and the ceremony was held on 24 September 1919.

As one of the Allies, Sïam signed the Treaty of Versailles and became one of the founding members of the League of Nations which was created in 1919. Francis B Sayre, who was the son in law of the president of the US, was appointed to seek revisions to the treaties imposed on Sïam by the Powers in Europe. This he succeeded as the result of which Sïam was again autonomous both fiscally and judicially. Sayre was given the name of Kalyạṇmaitrị (*lit* good friend).

The *Nẹtrnạrị* (Girl-Guides, *lit* girl's eyes) was founded in 1914. The *Yuvkạjạd́* (Young Red Cross) began on 27 January 1922.

The central railway station, Họa Lạmbọng, was built in 1916, while the construction of the Rama VI Bridge commenced on 15 June 1922. The bridge was opened on 1st January 1926, the first bridge ever to go across the *Càobrayạ* River. The northern railway line was also opened during this reign, with its 1.5 kilometre tunnel at Khuntạl.

Rama VI founded the Varrṇgd́ị Smọsaur (literary society) on 23 July 1914. Some of the plays that he wrote are *Họacaị Nakroḅ*, *Madnabạdhạ* and *Branol Gaṃlhoang*. He also took part in the plays he had written, wrote articles and drew cartoons for newspaper. From 1921 all Daiï children must enter a school when they reach the age of 7 to study for at least four years until Prathom IV or until they became 14.

In 1925 he donated a large plot of land to be turned into a public park, the Lumbiṇị Park. He died from appendicitis.

You enjoy living in a country more if you know something about its history. For example the headquarter of Loxley where I used to work is on the Sụapặ Road the name of which is created after the Wild Tiger introduced by Rama VI. And if you want to experience the first road ever built in Bạngkauk you may just take the Number 1 Bus. This bus follows the Croeñkrung Road as it was built by Rama IV.

Rama VII (Pokklào or Prajạdhipok Śakd́id́ẹjṅ, 8 Nov. 1893–30 May 1941) became king on 26 November 1925. He went to school in England at Eaton before going on to study soldiering. He organised the first national jamboree in Bạngkauk for Boys Scouts during 26 February–3 March 1927. He visited Singapore and Java in 1929, French Indo-China in 1930, and Canada and the US in 1931. During that time a meal costed about one stạngġ.

The first cinema had its foundation laid by the king on 1st July 1930. It was completed and opened on 2nd July 1933. There lived also at this time Bụñrauḍ Bhiromẏabhakd́ị who founded the Bụñrauḍ Brewery since 3rd April

1933, and Loeś Śreṣṭhbutr who rose from a factotum to an influential business man.

A group of military men led by four army officers, namely Bảhol Bolbyuhsẹ-nạ, Drongsurd́ej, Ṛiddhi Agneỷa and Praśạsṅ Bidyạyuddh, seized power from the king on 24 June 1932. Though Rama VII was a trained soldier himself, there was no resistance to the change on his part. But what followed were the struggles for power when coup d'états took place one after another. Seeing the state they put his country in, the king's heart was broken and he died, in England, of heart failure.

But the corruption and misuses of public funds went on. Money and power became the aim, while the means the taking of power by force and arms, together with the killing of innocent people who happened to be standing in the way of their road to hell. This had gone on until as late as 2008. These misuses done to the country are the main reasons for the accumulating international debts as well as the economic crisis in 1997.

Pṛid́ị Bnomyonggġ's controversial *smud́ poklhuang* (yellow-covered book), an economic plan that tries to serve the third policy among the six announced by the conspirators, which says, 'The economic well-being of the people shall be looked after. The new government shall find a job for every man and establish an economic plan such that there will be no hunger', resulted in the closure of the National Assembly on 1st April 1933 and then on 20 June of the same year.

Bibụlsonggrạm ousted the first prime minister, Mnọpkaurṇ Nitidhạd́ạ, thus began the tradition of the army's ruling over democracy. A failed attempt of a counter-coup followed on 11 October 1933 by a group of soldiers led by Ḅvaurd́ej. The Dharrmśạtṙ University was opened on 27 June 1934 as an open university which taught Laws and Political Economics, but then changed into a closed university.

Śṛịvijaï (11 June 1878–22 Mar. 1938) was the monk who built the road up the Sudẹb Mountain in *Jiangmhăi* between 9th November 1934 and 30 April 1935 when it was opened. The construction of this 12-km road lasted 5 months and 22 days, with 5,000 workers each day on average, all of whom were, I think, volunteers.

In 1932 the Pĭnkàeö rice won the First Prize at the International Exhibition at Regina, Canada. It is a *khàö nạsoan*. The other type of rice is *khàö nạrài*.

Rama VII abdicated on 2nd March 1934. Rama VIII (Ạnandmảhid́ol, 20 Sep. 1925–9 June 1946) came to the throne on 2nd March 1934. At the age of 21 he was murdered in his bed.

Virginia tobacco was introduced in the north in 1935. Bibụlsonggrạm set up the new *yuvjon dảhạr* (school cadet), whereby all male students of the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University must take part and wear the uniform to the uni-

versity. The *yuvnạrị* for girls followed after 1937.

In 1936 new roads were built, namely Bảholyọdhin, Sukhumvid and Bejrkṣẹm, the first two of which probably have their name from the name of Bảhol Bolbyuhsẹnạ who overthrew Rama VII's power and had become the prime minister and Pàn Sukhum who was one of the regents to Rama VIII.

On 29 June 1938 the four submarines arrived from Japan where they were built. They are namely Blạ̈jumbol, Macchạnu, Sinsmudr and Viruĺcaṃbang.

In 1938 the government asked for Rama V's Ḍusit Garden, which they then turned into the Ḍusit Zoo, aka Khaoḍinvnạ. The acts regarding preservation of the forests was passed and several national parks were established around the country.

Plạek Biḅulsonggrạm became the next prime minister towards the end of December of that year. In 1939 he created the 24th of June as the National Day when the foundation was laid of the Democracy Monument, which was completed and opened on the National Day of the following year.

The National *krị̣dạsthạn* (stadium) was built. Lùan Bongṣ̀sọbhoṇ invented the *sạmlạ̄u*, a tricycle that is a marriage between the bicycle and the rickshaw. This history is all very well, but I think the *sạmlạ̄u* was not invented but copied from India. The Bank of Daiï was set up on 24 June 1940, which if you remember is a National Day.

In 1939, the Third Republique of France under the presidency of Albert Lebrun was fighting Germany. The country found itself between the Nazis and the fascist Italy, much the same way that Sïam between the British colony of Burma and the French Indo-China during the 19th century. The *drôle de guerre* (astonishing war) ended with a disaster in May and June and the German occupation of France in 1940.

Meanwhile, in London General de Gaulle launched his famous mustering on 18 June. The armistice was signed on the 22nd and the *régime de Vichy* whereby Phillippe Pétain was given the full power was installed in the non-occupied zone in France during 1940–1944.

Over here on 8th October 1940 a mass of the School Cadets gathered in front of the Grand Palace. The French force still bombed Nảgaurbnom. The crisis was reached on 28 November after which Daiï army fought back and in doing so regained Caṃpạśakd́xi, Saṃrọng and Congkal of Siamrạṭh.

Starting from 1st January 1941 the Daiï New Year changed from 1st April to 1st January. The number of the Daiï consonants was reduced in order to simplify the language.

On 17 January 1941 the *Dhonḅurị* damaged *La Motte Piquet*, was hit in return and then sank. Japan intervened in the broils and Daiï was given back lands whereby the new Bratạbaung, Biḅulsonggrạm, Caṃpạśakd́xi and Lạnjạ̄ng were formed. The foundation of the new Victory Monument to be

built was laid on the National Day in 1941.

Then on 8th December 1941 Japan entered the Second World War, and on 11th December Daiï signed the agreement to become their ally. Pṛidị́ Bnomyongġ formed the anti-Japanese movement and in the *seṛidaiï* (free Daiï) was formed by Seṇiẏa Praṃoj in the US. There was a big flood in Bạngkauk in 1942 which lasted for more than a month.

In order to conquer India the Japanese built a railway line from Daiï to Burma. Thousands of prisoners of war lost their lives during the construction of the bridge across the River Gvạe (aka Kwai) the work of which started in September 1942 and the bridge opened on 25 December 1943. Among those who perished were people from Australia, England, Holland, Java and Malaya.

Trousers and skirts replaced the *congkraḅẹn* as the national dresses. Everyone had to wear a hat and learn how to stand in a queue. The practice of chewing *mhạk* (areca nuts) with betel leaves and lime was banned.

The Kṣẹtrśạstṙ College of 1938–1943, that used to be an agricultural college before 1938, was changed into the Kṣẹtrśạstṙ University in 1943. In 1966 its new campus at Kaṃbạengsạen was established. A university of Medicine was founded in 1943 which later became the Màhiḍol University. In the same year the Praṇiṭśilpkarrm School became the Śilpạkaur University. Its Nàgaurpṭhom campus at the Snạmcandṙ Palace was created in 1968.

Biḅụlsonggṛam wanted to move the capital city to Bejrḅụrṇ and set up the Buddhism headquarter in Sraḅuriị. Many people died from Malaria who went there to build the city, and as the result he had to resign from the premiership. Goang Àbhaïvongśx became the next prime minister on 1st August 1944.

Then on 6th August 1945 Hiroshima was bombed, on the 9th Nagasaki, and on the 14th the capitulation of Japan after which he annulled the alliance with Japan and resigned. Dvị Ḅuñykẹtu became the prime minister in the interim which lasted 17 days, during the period of which the Teacher Act of 1945 by which the *gurusbhạ* (teacher's council) was created.

The leader of the Free Daiï Movement, Seṇiẏa Praṃoj, came back from the US to become the new prime minister on 17 September 1945. Meanwhile Rama VII lived and studied in Europe. He came back to Daiï on 5th December 1945.

The about-face was fine with the US because the Free Daiï Movement's leader had been with them all along, but the UK wanted 1½ million tonnes of free rice from Daiï, whereby the US intervened to say that they should buy it. The agreement was signed on 1st January 1946.

In order to become a member of the United Nation, Daiï had to return all the lands it had gotten back to the Republic of France under the provisional government of Charles de Gaulle. It became the 55th member of the UN on

16 December 1946.

Goang Ȧbhaïvong became the prime minister again on 31 January 1946 but resigned after 45 days. He was replaced by Pṛídị Bnomyonggġ in March 1946. Biḅulsonggrạm was arrested but released at the end of that month.

Street names are ever changing, especially so those that are in honour of someone who had ruled with the absolute power. In the early 1990s the street on which I live had its name changed from Biḅulsonggrạm to Prajạrạjsạï 1 (*lit* The King's People Number 1).

On 5th May 1946 Rama VII endorsed the new constitution.

Rama IX (b, 5 Dec. 1927) succeeded Rama VIII to the throne on 9th June 1946. During his reign universities were created, for instance *Culạ́bhaurṇ* in *Jaïbhụmi, Jiangmhăi, Khạunkặen, Laṃtagaung* in *Nȧgaurrạjsịmạ, Songkhlạnȧgrindṙ* and *Śṛịnȧgrindrviroḍh.*

The *Càobrayạ* Dam was built in Jaïnạd during 1952–1960 and the Bhụmibol Dam in *Tạk* during 1958–1964. Other dams are Ḅạnglạng in Nrạdhivạs, Kặengkracạn in Bejrḅuri, Nāṃbaung and Uḅolratṅ in Khaunkặen, Nāṃbung in Skolnȧgaur, Sirikiti in Utrȧ́ditth, and Sirindhaur in Uḅolrạjdhạni

From 22 October until 5 November 1956 the king became a monk, and during the period Queen Sirikiṭi (b. 12 Aug. 1932) reigned in place of him.

Anno Domini 1957 is an important date in Buddhism for it marks the middle point of the third millennium in the Buddhist Era. At Śạlạyạ in Nȧgaurpṭhom was built the Buddhmoṇḍol on the ground of 2,500 *rài* where a new Buddha image was placed which is 2,500 *krabiaá* (16.25 m) high.

From this time onwards marshals replaced the monarchs who called themselves prime ministers. These Field Marshals started from Plạek Biḅulsonggrạm who ruled the country during 1940–45 and again in 1947, Thnaum Kittikhcaur in 1957, Sṛiṣḋxi Dhnarajṭ (d. 9 Dec. 1963) in 1959, and Kittikhcaur again in 1963.

The word 'communists' came to be frequently used by some of them to label younger people, especially university students who stood up against their rules, many of whom insisted that they were protesting for democracy and against tyranny.

Whenever there was a coup d'état there would be announcements on the radio, curfews imposed, and no gatherings of people no matter how small a group allowed. These coup d'états are like the tossing of a coin. On one side is written *kḥoṭ* (rebel) and on the other *pṭivati* (revolution). The latter applies if it should succeed while the former if it fails. Only one thing is certain, that is that you are doomed if charged for being a communist.

Kṛiṣna says in the Bhagavad Gītā, ' "I do not do anything," should think the harmonised one, who knoweth the essence of things; seeing, hearing, touching,

smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing'. The Daiï monk Buddhdạs says something similar, '*Van nị̄ dāng van rao màidàì daṃ arai loeï*', in other words, 'Today I have not done anything'. However his words were either misleading or misinterpreted when he said that killing Communist is no sins.

The state of detachment mentioned by Kṛiṣna is that which resembles natural phenomena, in general our subconscious self. A man is never without attachments except when his subconsciousness is at work instead of the conscious mind.

All martial arts strive to train this subconscious mind through repeatedly doing some actions. The Arts of Fighting are thus never a sport. Less so are they a path to become a warrior. They are solely the teaching of the subconscious mind how to dance.

When Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) used the word *dance*, I think he also means the same thing as that here, that is to say, the involuntary actions. In *Thus speaks Zarathustra* (1883) he made Zarathustra tell us, 'To dance beyond yourselves! What does it matter that you are failures!' This is the same detachment from actions valued alike by the *Bhagavad Gītā* and martial artists.

Therefore, knowing that you are killing a communist, say, it is a sin, because God says, 'Thou shalt not kill!' In fact it is a sin already if we are bent upon killing. Our actions are ruled by our consciousness, therefore we are held answerable to them.

We can only see glimpses of our subconscious mind when it is at work in emergency situations in the form of reflexes. Fighting should be a reflex, and its sole purpose a self-defence. In this state one will not. Most laws recognise this and say that no actions done in a spontaneous self-defence be considered a *crime*, this word being the closest earthly equivalence to *sin*. In fact one never sees how his own subconscious actions work. One sees only the results, and others the actions. Neither knows how it works. This is what makes sports like archery so attractive. One never have a control at the moment immediately before the bow is released. You never do well if you try to control that very instance. It is in the same realm, I would say, of percolation, where something takes place by itself when the time is ripe.

Organised in Philippines in 1957, the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation gave an award to Nilvarrṇ Pĭndaung on Social Services in 1961, Póaï Ùengbhạkaurṇ on Economics in 1965, Fhon Sạengkạ̀eö on Health Organisation in 1966, Siddhibaur Kṛuedạ́kaur on Agriculture in 1967, Prayụr Carryạvongṣ on Journalism in 1971, Crụñ Pạncandṛ on his counter-drug treatments using traditional herbs in 1975, Krasạe Jnavongśx on Medical Services in 1976, Praveṣ Vasị on Medical Research in 1981, and Pradịp Ùengdrongdharrm on Public Services in 1978.

The names of Daiï people usually have no tonal marks. This is because

they are normally words with a Sanskrit origin. On the other hands names in *Lạ̄nnạ* often come from Pali. Neither one of these two languages is a tonal language.

Apart from the onomatopoeia no words in Daiï have tonal symbols other than the *ẹk* and *dọ* symbols. The Dai language before the Tonal Split which occurred around mid-*Ȧyudhyạ* period must have had either three or four tones and two symbols. If you come across a Daiï word which has either the *trị* or the *catvạ* symbol, you can safely assume that it is either foreign in origin or onomatopoeic. From this we can see that the name *Póaï* above is no Daiï words. In fact it is Chinese.

During 1959–60 the king and queen visited countries in Asia, Australia, Europe and the US. In Asia he went to Burma, Indonesia and Vietnam. An international airport was built at *Ḍaunmuang*, and in 1960 the Thai Airways International was founded.

In 1961 the Bhụbingġ Palace was built in *Jiangmhăị* and after that the Dakṣiṇ and Bhụbạn Palaces. Culạ̀rạjmontrị was created to head people who believe in Islam. He visited Malaysia during 20–27 June 1962, Japan during 27 May–5 June 1963 during the 38$^{\text{th}}$ year of Emperor Shouwa's reign.

Śilp Bịraśrị died in 1962. He was an Italian art professor who had lived in Daiï since 1923 and had built many statues for the monuments here.

On 18 August 1964 was opened the planetarium in Bạngkauk. About fifteen years later I went there with a school trip and had a memorable experience. In 1965 Ạbhasrạ Hongskul won the Miss Daiï Contest and then the Miss Universe one which was held in Florida.

Daiï hosted the Fifth Asian Games in 1966, and again the Eight in 1978. The Southeast Asia Peninsula Games was first organised in Bạngkauk in 1961 and the Fourth SEAP Games was held again here during 9–16 December 1967. Then Brunei, Indonesia and Philippines joined the games and it changed into the Southeast Asian Games.

Hẹm Vẹjkaur (17 Jan. 1903–16 April 1969) was an illustrator and painter. He illustrated many literary and historical books. By 1970 textiles had become the most important industry in the country.

In 1971 was founded the open university, the Rạmgaṃhạeng University. Also in 1971 the Railway Authority gave a piece of land to the king that was eventually built into the Ctucakr Park which was opened on 30 December 1978. Elizabeth II came to Daiï in February 1972 and the king and queen of Malaysia was here in February 1973.

On 14 October 1973 the army under the Field Marshal Kittikhcaur opened fire on students who gathered to demonstrate for democracy. In the end he had to resign and together with his family fled the country. The king appeared on the television to talk to the people on the evening of 17 October.

He had appointed the Vice-Chancellor of the Dharrmśạstṙ University, Sañyạ Dharrmśakd́xi, to be the next prime minister from 16 October.

Sạenśakd́xi Muangsurindṙ, also known as Sạeḅ, won the World Championship in junior welter-weight (135–147 lb.) on 15 July 1975 and many times thereafter. The western-style boxing as a sport was introduced in Daiï in 1927 and Phọn Kĭngbejr won the title in flyweight (112 lb. or less).

Phọn was before my time, but I remember watching Sạeḅ on the television several times, that is when he won against Pedro Fernandez in 1975 in Ḅạngkauk and again on 29 October 1976 when he won Miguel Velazquez in Spain. Somehow the teacher or someone produced a television set which we all watch in the classroom instead of studying.

We also watched Muhammad Ali (*né* Cassius Clay, b. 1942) fought for the heavy-weight (175 lb. or over) title in the same manner, but it was towards the end of his career as a boxer and he did not always win.

The *Hạngyạ̈* (long-tailed) boat was invented in Daiï. It has a small propeller at the end of the long tube extending behind the boat. Providing the worst source of the noise pollution because it is very loud, it is found everywhere from Ḅạngkauk to the Khọng River on the Laos border. The engine is never put inside any casing and there are no measures to counter the blast.

Sundrạbhaurṇ or Ùa Sundaursnạn (1910–1981) wrote and sang songs in Daiï in the style similar to crooners of 1930s and 1940s to whom he was a contemporary. The Stock Exchange of Daiï began its operation on 30 April 1975.

Princess Sirindhaur received her Bachelor of Arts in languages from the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University on 15 July 1977, while Princess Cuĺạbhaurṇ received her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the Kṣẹtrśạstṙ University on 19 July 1979. Both received their degree from the king.

In 1991 I received my first BEng in Mining Engineering from King Rama IX, in 1992 my BS in Computer Science from Princess Sirindhaur, and in 1993 again another BEng in Electrical Engineering from the king.

Formerly Nhaunggạï was known as Ḅàṇphăi. King Rama III (1787–1851, reigned 1824–1851) founded the province in 1827 and named it *Nhaunggạï* after the name of a lake west of the town. Dāö Suvạu (Ḅuñmạ) became *Brapdumdẹvạbhiḅal*, the first governor of Nhaunggạï.

Hairdressing schools in Daiï have places for their students to practise on a real subject where you can have your hair cut for free. Usually the teacher starts at your hair on one side and then lets his student carry on with the other. Thus these schools represent an apprenticeship where the students pay for the customers' haircut. They pay their tuition fee, say, for a year and during this period practise under supervision.

My hair is straight and sometimes I have it curled before having the hair cut, after which I look somewhat better. You can alter your appearance simply by having your hair curled.

Schools of dentistry also have a similar thing for their students to work on a real subject. You have your treatment for free or for a small fee. Here at the dental college of the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University I have my four wisdom teeth removed in 1989 and throw them all into the pond behind the university's front gate. Then I go to England for traineeships at John Dallimore and Partners in Walton-on-Thames during the summer holiday.

In 1996 I have the amalgam filling in my teeth replaced with gold inlays when I visit Daiï from Japan, again at the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University's dental college. Dentists are divided into two camps, one which is for amalgam while the other against it. In England and Europe they use gold in place of amalgam whereas in Japan composite materials are preferred. In Daiï, however, people still like to use the mercurial amalgam that I surprise everyone when I say what I want done. Some of the gold have not been well-fitted and they will prove to cause troubles afterwards.

From Saturday 22nd November until Sunday 14^{th} December 1997 I am in Daiï, and until 7th December show Megumi around the country in the pick-up that my father had newly bought. Her bag has been damaged on the plane and needs to be repaired, so we do that on Sunday. Then we go to the Cạ̀eng Temple and come back by boat from the pier there.

We buy the train tickets on Monday 25th, then visit the Brakàeö Temple, where the Grand Palace is, and then come back to our place at Rama VII by the express boat from the Ạdityạ Pier. Then we catch the train to *Jiangmhăị* in the evening.

We go up to the Sudẹb Mountain in *Jiangmhăị* the following day. We make a circuit trip where we drive to Mậe Hàungsaun. On the 27th we stay in Mậe Sariang.

On our way here I stopped the car on the mountain road around 9 pm or so, then we put some mosquito lotion on, get off the car and look up at the Milky Way in the sky. It shines so brightly here, the testimony of the Creation, a promenade across the sky with contour so distinct a child would never have missed and there is no question about mistaking it for the cloud. One does not need to learn about it in the class before one recognises it here where you feel yourself so close to the Universe and to God.

On the 28th we stay at Mậe Hàungsaun, on the 29th at Pạ̈ï, and back to *Jiangmhăị* on the 30th. On Monday 1st December I show her during the day the temples and at night the Night Bazaar while the car is being serviced after its first long drive.

We are on our way to Bạngkauk the following day. On Tuesday we stay at Sukhọdaï. On Wednesday 3rd we visit Sukhọdaï and Śrịsajnạlaï, and stay at

Kaṃbạengbejr, on Thursday at *Ȧyudhyạ* where we spend some time on the following day before going back to Bạngkauk.

To Daiï people the history of the country normally begins with the Sukhọdaï Kingdom. The kings of Sukhọdaï are namely

Nạönaṃdhom;
Indrḅ́indrạdityạ (Phạmuang);
Indrạdityạ (Bạng Klạng-hạö);
Bạnmuang (d. 1279);
Rạmgaṃhạeng (reigned. 1279, d. 1299);
Saisonggrạm (r. 1299, d. 1322);
Lọedai (r. 1322, d. 1340);
Ngọanaṃthom (r. 1340, d. 1347);
Śrịsụryạbongśxrạm or Dharrmrạjạ I (Lidai, r. 1347);
Dharrmrạjạ II;
Dharrmrạjạ III (Sailụedai, d. 1419); and
Dharrmrạjạ IV (Brompạl, r. 1419, d. 1438).

'What is all this nonsense about the reverse brain drain?', I think to myself as a manager at the Daiï national research body NECTEC tells me that they are having problems with funds and there will be no jobs for me there, 'They told us not a year ago to come back and serve our country, and I emailed them and they seemed like they would be very happy if I could come back to Daiï and work for them in the field of E-commerce. What perfidy!'

Myself I never like the idea that we should flock together if only arguing from the fact that we are human not bird, for instance. A wide network with long-distance co-operations is by far a better idea that is more robust.

But I come back to Daiï all the same, not because there is no opportunities for me to live and work in Japan, but because I find it more challenging to be here when the economic crisis of the country is at its worst. Japan also has its share of economic downturns it is true. But these are by no means a crisis, the robust essential and fundamental elements of the country's society does not allow this.

No, it is right here that I had wondered, most often silently but sometimes aloud, to myself and some friends of mine why such an unrobust society as this had lasted for so long and seemed to be thriving even. But I have applied for a job everywhere and have not been given even half a job.

I ask God, 'Father, why am I here? I am not needed here, so I want to know wherefore you put me here and not elsewhere'. Of course there is no reply from Him, or I would not be standing here now if there was one. You never expect a reply from God, for His attribute is that of a good listener. But have faith that he knows your needs and is working out something for you. You need never bother to make a lengthy descriptive or narrative prayer

either, for he knows what you need before you realise it even.

At the end of June 1999 I read books from the library of the Japan Cultural Centre again. I used to be a member here before, but my card has long since expired. However, I can use my old membership number, which is G 007, and since it sounds like an exclamation followed by the number of Bond I am quite happy with it.

The library is still free of charge now. But not long after this however, that is in 2003, the library introduces a fee for borrowing members. This is the case with not only this library but also the library at the Goethe Institut. This is not at all good, since a library should be free of charge. Knowledge should be free for all and affordable to everyone.

By 30^{th} July I have applied through the British Council in Ḅangkauk for places to do a PhD in Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at Cambridge and in Political Economics at the London School of Economics. I have to ask both David and Graham to be my referee.

I also apply to do the Study of Translation, and write to Mona to say that I am interested in machine translation, My research interest is in machine translation and the design and implementation of a word-processor that is capable of multi-language environments. The examples of these are TEX and Mule. There are ample rooms for developments in this area, some of the things of which are fundamental.

Furuta still lacks compassion as ever, for he writes to me on 13^{th} August 1999 to discourage me from researching and teaching. And imagine Ben still suggests that I should return to Japan to complete the degree!

I have come to doubt the integrity of heathens. Most Buddhists whom I know are to me agnostics. Either this or they are pragmatists even in their dream, and thus are attached to nothing except idols. I also apply to the University of Paris-6.

I cannot live without playing the piano. Since there are no libraries in Daiï that have piano musics, I ask Rick on the 16^{th} to buy some of them for me from the Internet. He is in Ohio and therefore it is easier from him to buy things that way there. I must have thought that I shall live forever, in Daiï in any case, for I buy so many books of musics by various composers, among others Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909; *Iberia and Espana*), Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788), Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750; *Italian concerto, chromatic fantasia and fuge*; Organ music), Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1707), William Byrd (1542 or 1543–1623; *My lady nevells booke of virginal music*), César Auguste Franck (1822–1890; Organ works), François Couperin (1668–1733), French piano music, Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829–1869), Enrique Granados (1867–1916; *Goyescas, Spanish dances*), George Frideric Handel (1685–1759), Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809; *Complete piano sonatas*), Franz Liszt (*Piano transcriptions from French and Italian Operas*), Johann Pachelbel (1653–

1706), Russian piano music, Erik Satie (Alfred Eric Leslie Satie, 1866–1925; *Gymnopedies, gnossiennes and other works*), Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757; *keyboard sonatas*), Franz Peter Schubert (1797–1828; *Dances for solo piano*), Piano transcription of marches by John Philip Sousa (1854–1932), Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621), and Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767; *36 fantasias for keyboard*).

By 11^{th} December 1999 I have been jobless for more than seven months. During the first six months of that period I was very upset. Having written to no less than a hundred companies, I have found no jobs.

I went to Paris for a one-year DEA which could lead to another three years of PhD. But the expense is higher than I had expected, so I came back. Also, my French is terrible and I found it difficult to follow the lectures.

I am at the moment more relaxed now, taking life as it comes. I read books on Philosophy which I could borrow from the library at the Goethe Institut, and I play the piano. Today I went to Goethe Institut again and then to Cuĺạ because it was the third and last day the Cuĺạ *vijạkạr* (teaching) Days.

The BTS, that electrified, elevated train dubbed the *skytrain*, is already up and running. The infrastructure of Bạngkauk is going to take shape at long last, which is amazing for a city this size. All good things come late even when they are on time. The lateness of something only goes to say that it is here, and nothing more. The timing is nothing, the attitude everything.

For most parts of 2000 I am without jobs and live in Bạngkauk. I try to find out how to tune the piano myself, but it seems to be difficult. I search on the Internet, and come up with things like, 'You can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish'. Puns are well-liked the world over.

I see Ben sometimes, and when I mention this to him he tells me another one which he has seen in an ad I think of the Guinness Beer. It goes, 'Toucans in a nest. Try it and see what one or toucans do'.

He says you have to bring out what you have and say to people, 'This is me. Try me!', to be employed. I think that this is synthesised from all the know-how's you know. But before that is the know-why's which are the results of the reflection and research you have done on the knowledge or information you have.

A country is never without wraths. When you do not heed its needs, it resorts to social problems. I wish I could keep myself aloof and out of this world. But a young girl misusing her body, for instance, is nothing new on earth. Thinking that they are defying the rules, they are in fact greatly influenced by them. If she is proud that she has finally done what others believe to be wrong, then she is actually under the influence of the social norms and taboos as much as those who told her not to do such things. I hope she sees what I mean.

This is mid-April (20^{th}) and the hottest time of the year. Hedge-funds only destroy your body, but drugs get rid of your soul. This is the stuff that the percolation of a country is made of. It is the question of *to be*, or *not to be*, to be no more.

I remember that Ken told me, in early October of 1998, how a boy who failed in maths was sent to a Catholic school, after which he turned a genius on the subject. It was not the school but the boy himself who did it. 'On that first day, when I walked in the front door,' he related, 'and saw that guy nailed to the plus sign, I *knew* they were serious!'

Possibly, a partial solution to the question, '*Muss mann zuerst sterben wird, daß mann immer um zu leben kann?*', must be to 'learn as if to live forever; live as if to die tomorrow'.

Towards the end of 2000 I do some research in languages at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in the UK, which leads to the discovery of a new writing system using the Roman alphabet for the Daiï language by the end of 2001.

In the Daiï writing system space is for separating ideas, the equivalent of the punctuation marks comma, semi-colon, colon and full stop in English. You put no space between words in general. To a novice this makes the syllabification a nightmare. I adopt the English system of punctuations.

Then the 32 Daiï vowels become a, ạ, i, ị, ue, ụe, u, ụ, e, ẹ, ae, ạe, o, ọ, au, ạu, oe, ọe, ia, ịa, ua, ụa, oa, ọa, ṛue, ṛụe, ḷue, ḷụe, aṃ, ai, aị and ao. I standardise these myself.

The philosophy that underlies my design is based on both the application and appeals. The tone symbols are adapted from the *pīn yīn* system of China which was developed in Russia's Siberia.

As for the consonants, I follow Pali and Sanskrit as much as possible and derive my own way of writing when these fail me, always using only either a dot below them or an acute accent above them or, only once, both. The name of the letters of the alphabet are all read with the vowel *ạu*, for example *k* is read 'kạu', *g* 'gạu', and so on, except when you group them into the five groups, each one of which containing five consonants, according to the Pali and Sanskrit grammars when they are read with the vowel *a* instead. These groups are namely the *ka, ca, ṭa, ta* and *pa*, and are listed respectively as *ka, kha, ga, gha, nga*; *ca, cha, ja, jha, ẏa*; *ṭa, ṭha, ḍa, ḍha, ṇa*; *ta, tha, da, dha, na*; and *pa, pha, ba, bha, ma.*

The dot above a consonant replaces the mute symbol *kạrant̀*, and the consonant under it is thereby not pronounced. The *a* vowel that comes with these muted consonants may be omitted, for example the word *kạrant̀* above may be written as *kạrant̀* without ambiguity, but other vowels, namely *i* and *u*, that come with them must be written, for example, *śakd́xi* (honour) and *bandhu* (genealogy).

The capital *X* is never used, and neither is *x* as a letter of the alphabet. The latter when put behind another consonant is equivalent to the dot above it. This is in order to avoid having two symbols above any letter the appearance of which I think awkward. An example of this is the word *śakd́xi* just mentioned.

A dot above a vowel means that the latter is *rāi ruṗ*, that is with no written form. These are predominantly the *a rāi ruṗ* or non-written *a*, which is written *ȧ*. Some *ạu* can also be written as *ȧ*, for example *ḅạud́indṙa* (king) is the same as *ḅȧd́indṙ* or *ḅd́indṙ*.

When the vowel *ạu*, *ịa*, *ụa*, or *ọa* is followed by a final consonant, the dot that comes with it may be omitted as the result of which it is shortened respectively into *au*, *ia*, *ua* and *oa*.

All syllables in Daiï have the form c_1vc_2 where c_1 is its leading- while c_2 its final consonant.

Another reserved character is the *q*, which becomes equivalent for the character that precedes it to a dot below it. You only use this in cases where there are no ways of writing that dot. These are the only two reserved characters, namely the *x* and the *q*.

But similarly to them the acute accent may be replaced by the *z* written behind the corresponding letter. This is true in cases where it appears on top of a vowel as well as when on a consonant. The four tone-symbols likewise has their typewriter's replacements, as can be best shown when one considers *kạ, kặ, kạ̀, kạ̄, kạ́* which become *kaq, kaqv, kaqh, kaqf, kaqz* respectively. Here the *q* stands for the under-dot as is already mentioned.

'A Night at the Opera' is a concert on Saturday and Sunday 18th–19th March 2000 at the Oriental Hotel in Bạngkauk. I help in the performance as a volunteer, doing solo *goang blaung* (pole, in this case flag, spinning) and some sword acts. On 5th March we have a meeting at *Daḅ Leṇ* in *Smudrpraḳạr*, on the 11th at Karen's place in Brakhnọng, on the 15th a rehearsal inside the gymnasium at the International School of Bangkok on Sukhumvid Road, and on the 16th a run-through.

In the performance I wear on each leg a covering made of cloth and shaped like a tube. At the bottom end of this are attached two long ropes which I pass under the sole of my foot, around my ankle, and then criss-crossing up the leg.

I have made myself a silvery helmet which guards my head at the temples and then down the sides of my face and my chin. On top of my head a part of the helmet forms a cross. I perform barefoot. With the swords I do on the first night a mimic *tị-kled́* (improvising) bout, cascade-necks and then the *māisạm*.

On the second night I feel fed up because Pop had cut up the piece of rope that I use to wind around my swords in place of a scabbard. The rope is a

relic from my days in the UK when I used to wind it around my hand the way the rope-fisted boxer did in the old Sïam. He has found it on the top of the shelf where I meticulously hid it earlier and has now wound it around his feet. He is the stage producer and I have no clues for what he has been dressing up.

I salute with the sword and then pose the *glum traibhob*, in the *Laṃbụn* style of *Páung*, where the swords cross each other in shape of a cross and the upper part of one arm rests on the wrist of the other. Because of the salute my bout becomes too short and nobody likes my performance for the second night. Also with the flags I turn myself around while doing the *thẹ̣r kvạ́d lạn* instead of always facing the audience.

I have added one piece of costume to my body this evening, that is the cuirass I had made last night. Two strings go up to either side of my neck and then cross each other behind my back before they are fastened to the sides of the breastplate. Polovtsian wears no backplates.

In the evening before the show on each night I swim in the hotel's swimming pool. Tonight I stay in the Room 2008 at the Sheraton Hotel under Cuk's name. She had reserved some rooms there in case some of those who were helping in the concert need some place to stay for the night. But everybody was happy to return to their respective home however late, and I am left by myself to this spacious and luxurious room which I enormously enjoy, and the breakfast. In the two pools of the hotel, one in the Embassy Garden on the ground floor and the other on the first floor, I swim the next morning for half an hour. Then I go up to my room to wait for Cuk to call, and when she finally come down to meet and talk with her over the coffee.

My mother tongue is a language called *Lạ̄nnạ* and my second language Daiï. My first experience of English was in 1972 at the age of six when I was put into an exam room to answer English language questions, having not yet started to learn my ABC. That did it; I cried and the experience stuck.

My firsthand experience of a language that comes close to extinction through politics and negligence is through my first language. Not only for Lạ̄nnạ, but now that the Internet percolates and with it English what Ward (2002) calls a *language cull* is a phenomenon of concern which is wiping out languages and language clusters all over the world.

Having spent a great part of my life living outside Daiï, I have grown an interest in transcription systems. This is because Daiï cannot be written on the computer easily. With an exception of the machine language which uses only zeros and ones, which no one uses, every computer language from the Assembly language upwards is written in English. This makes things difficult not only for Daiï, but even for German or French.

Encoding standards like Unicode have fought a long and losing battle since no one ever feel confidence with any one of them, let alone feeling secure

enough from changes. Once you get outside a cluster of a country like Daiï, you can be assured that life will become very hard for you computerwise unless you can translate all your thoughts into English or are able to write your national script using a roman alphabet transcription.

I have thought and sought long and hard for such transcriptions which will work for Lā̤nnā̤ and Daiï. Many have tried their hands on this and failed, at least in my point of view. The trouble with these two languages is that they are tonal. Moreover both have more characters than the sounds to represent them with due to historical reasons, as a result many letters necessarily have the same sound.

I discovered the system that I like, and that I am convinced would work, during the most solitary Christmas I have experienced to date, that is that of 2001. Two existing systems help towards the derivation of this system of mine, namely the *Pīn Yīn* system of Chinese and the Romanised systems for Pali and Sanskrit.

One may rest assured that Chinese will never be wiped out from the surface of the earth, if only by reasoning from the shear number of people speaking and writing it. But even for a language of such potential as Chinese the help towards this prospect of longevity comes no less from the transcription system just mentioned, *Pīn Yīn*, which is surprisingly, and ironically, discovered by the Russians. As a transcription for a tonal language, *Pīn Yīn* puts all the tonal marks above the letters, to be more precise the vowels.

Romanised Pali and Sanskrit systems on the other hand is no tonal languages but have trouble mapping their alphabet into that of English. As a solution, new characters are created from the roman characters by three different methods, namely putting a dot beneath the letter, writing an *h* behind it, or putting an accent mark on top of it. There are two accents used for such purpose, that is the tilde and the acute accent.

I adapted the tonal marks placed on top of vowels from Chinese, and the creation of new characters from the method used for these ancient Indo-European languages of the India subcontinent. Luckily these two different adaptations do not conflict with each other as the former only adds things on top of vowels while the latter do so underneath or on top of a consonant.

The only conflict observed so far comes from the silencing symbol which I keep on top of a consonant, which seldomly has to go on top of an accent. Generally I dislike any two symbols being put on top of a single letter, but in this case the phenomenon is so rare as to be comparable with the occasional sixth or seventh put into a minor chord in composing a piece of music that I think it will do for now.

All the dots and accents mentioned of course can get into the Internet with neither ease nor elegance, as the French and the German have taught us. But one can choose to omit them as the French do or, what I prefer, to change

them each into a letter like the German does.

I follow this preference to the letter as a result of which if French were written using my general system on an English-only computing environment, then all the accents and cédilles will be changed into their respective equivalent letters. At this stage all the transcriptions become possible. It will be another huge leap of faith to the next step where everything, accents and all, may be transcribed on an accent-unfriendly environment of a monolingual computer.

Definitions of the single and the compound vowels differ between the languages of South East Asia and those of the West as a result of which many of the single vowels in the former would have been described as being compound in the latter. Bhụmiśakdżi (1963) in his monograph on the Lahu language followed the original definitions of the languages. He used only one vowel for each of his vowels which are single but had to add *h* and *r* behind most of them to account for their number. His representations of the tonal marks are similar to those found in normal use, which also differs from the one I propose here, but seem to follow rules which either are difficult to remember or are still in the making and thus have not been adequately simplified for use. This may be due to the fact that he wrote the treatise while being detained in the Lặdyặö gaol in Bạngkauk for being a communist, the charge put on him by the militant dictator who rules at that time.

It is also interesting to note that *Pīn Yīn* is also a product of a, this time genuine, communist regime. It was created in Russia during the time when many minority languages of the country are given systematic transcriptions; obviously among these was Mandarin.

According to Bohan (1978) ‡, the New Latin Script started by the overseas Chinese in Vladivostok in 1931. The present approach differs from his in that here only the five vowel letters of English are considered as single vowels. This may have been the *Pīn Yīn* system in its earliest form. It is interesting to note how a Latinised system should have been created in Russia.

I have no doubt that my system will be able to accommodate Lahu as comfortably as it does Daiï and Lạ̄nna, but still have to prove this in practice in the future.

Vladivostok is a southern port city of Russia. It has been occupied by both the western as well as the Japanese forces. But in 1931 when what Bohan called the New Latin Script for Chinese started, the city belonged to Russia under Lenin. Therefore it would be interesting to find out whether this purported new script used the Latin alphabet or the Cyrillic. The latter

‡ Cao Bohan. The Chinese language movement since the May Fourth Period. in *Language reform in China.* Peter J Seybolt and Gregory Kuei-ke Chiang. Eds. M E Sharp Inc. 1978 (1979).

is of course the official script of Russia.

My conjecture is that the new transcription system was originally written in Cyrillic and then Romanised after the Chinese government adopted and nationalised it. Russia at the time was in a high spirit as it was only one year ago that Lenin told the Russian people not to be *dizzy with success* after a *tremendous achievement* in collective farming.

Such system was found published in Moscow two decades after China first became aware of the system (Oshanina, 1955) † as a Chinese–Russian dictionary in which words like *shuō*, *to speak*, was written in the cyrillic Russian script as *shō* and *shuōlǐ*, *to argue*, as *shuolǐ*. The tonal marks which are the strong point of the new system are the same in both. This publication reflects an effort in the systematic transcription of languages other than Russian in Russia at that time.

Still I think *Pīn Yīn* is but a phonetic aid, not a transcription. It is my idea to develop a truly transcriptional system. Most if not all of the attempts in the past towards this aim failed because people tried to put too many things on the text line. As I see it, the space below the line is never used by any Romanised system for Chinese. So my idea is to transcribe not only the pronunciation, which *Pīn Yīn* has already gracefully achieved, but also to transcribe the radicals or *bùshǒu* as the following sentence which was the first one that I tried out shows,

Zhāng Míng Lóng is a name of a person.

gc ry

You should not simply say Zhāng Míng Lóng
because that is not specific enough.
So Zhāng Míng Lóng is a name,

gc ry

and not a game. Let us see what
the next line skip shall be.

In this example the last word *Lóng* which means *a dragon* is a radical, which

† I M Oshanina. *Chinese–Russian Dictionary.* (*Kitaĭsko–Russkiĭ Slovarb*) State Publisher. Foreign and National Lexicographer. (*Gosudarstvennoe Izdatelbstvo. Inostrannyĭ i Nacionalbnyĭ Slovareĭ*) Moscow. 1955.

is indicated by an underdot. The word *Zhāng* here comprises of two radicals, namely *gōng*, *a bow*, and *cháng* which means *long*; *g* represents the former, *c* the latter. The other word *Míng* used in this Chinese name of mine also has two radicals, *i.e.* *rì* which means *the Sun*, and *yuè*, *the Moon*; *r* represents the former, *y* the latter.

In this case if nothing is indicated underneath a word, then it is a phonetic transcription and thus subjected to ambiguity in the meaning. This system is therefore an extension to *Pīn Yīn*. In other words, what I propose here is a new transcription system which uses the phonetic system of *Pīn Yīn*. Once set out, there are much work to be done to ensure the isomorphism and the ease of use.

I came to Manchester in September 1999 expecting to a PhD work in Language Engineering. I was assigned to work under the supervision of Dr Fawcett at the translation group. In one of the few meetings I had with him I mentioned to him that one of the reasons why I wished to do my PhD in language and translation is that I would like to make electronic standards for Lạnnạ and Daiï. I had thought about the problem for about five years. In that meeting Peter asked me where one could find a book on Lạnnạ grammar. After the meeting I thought about his question and as a result my approach to the problem slightly changed its course.

I was born in Jiangmhăị, the old capital of Lạnnạ which is now a part of Daiï, so Lạnnạ is my mother tongue. In a way Daiï is also my mother tongue, but I only started using it at school.

Both Daiï and Lạnnạ has a writing script which is unrelated to the Roman script used in Europe. I have found no books on the Lạnnạ grammar at the several libraries in Manchester I normally use. I would have liked to write a grammar book on the Lạnnạ language for Peter in Romanised transcription. But in order to be able to do so, one need to have the transcription system in question first. This simply exists for neither Daiï nor Lạnnạ, nor indeed any of the languages in the Dai family.

The same is also true for Chinese, which is also a tonal language. In the case of languages which are based on the Chinese characters, the numerous amount of characters, thousands of them, makes transcription possible only for the pronunciation. One cannot distinguish the different words which have the same pronunciation from one another.

In case of Daiï where many letters of the alphabet may have the same sound, where vowels are in great number and where many exceptions in the pronunciation exist, such Romanised writing system has often been deemed impossible.

During the Christmas vacation in 2001 I found a solution to the problem.

The solution which I think is the best I have ever seen. I have rigorously tested it for Daiï and I am convinced that it works well there. I have extended the system to Lā̱nnā̱, and it seems to be working well there too. I adapt it for both Japanese and Chinese, where I think a Romanised writing which gives a one-to-one mapping can become possible, but there are more work to be done if only because of the shear number of their characters. For many reasons, Japanese has proved so far to be far more difficult to deal with than Chinese.

The systems which I designed for the use with Lā̱nnā̱ and Daiï are based on the *Pīn Yīn* system, developed in Russia and used in China, the Romanised systems for Pali and Sanskrit, a small part from the writing of German, and the rest I myself designed. My aim is for systems that not only work, but also give likeable results.

All languages of the world form clusters. It is not difficult to imagine such clusters or groups of languages. One may ask what are the things which bind languages in the same cluster together. One possible answer may be their ancestral history. Languages will form clusters differently depending on what criteria we think bind them together.

To me, languages are bounded together when they share a writing system in common. Because of this, Russian and Greek with their unique scripts seem very different from English, even though all of them are Indo-European languages, while on the other hand Hungarian are easier to read, and as a result looks more familiar, despite the fact that it belongs to a completely different family.

Languages in Asia and Europe form three major clusters, namely the Indo-European, Chinese, and Tai clusters. To the Indo-European group belong most of the languages in Europe and India, as well as Iranian. To the Chinese cluster belong Chinese, Japanese and Korean. And to the Dai cluster belong Daiï, Lā̱nnā̱, and many other languages including Ahom which is already extinct.

The transcription systems which I designed will help bring these these three clusters of languages together and make the transfer of knowledges and experiences among them easier. This will help create a better cross cultural understanding, which will lead us closer to the globalisation of the world. After Japanese and Chinese, I plan to develop similar Romanised writing systems for all the languages of the Dai family.

On the other hand, the thing which bind a group of people together is the dialect. Therefore people from Ireland living in Manchester form a local Irish community but people of Irish descendant who live in Australia or New Zealand never form such a group, because the Irish dialect is retained in the former while the latter either speak Aussie or Kiwi accent and thus identify themselves with their present respective countries.

From this it follows that racism is not the hatred of races as such, but rather

the aversion and prejudice against languages or dialects that are different from one's own. The Jewish community in the Nazi Germany, for instance, while able to use German, are bound together by Yiddish.

In Lāṇnạ there is a story that during the time of the Burmese occupation, nearly three centuries ago before *Ayudhyạ* fell for the second time, the Burmese would kill anyone they came across who had the distinctive Daiï accent.

I develop these systems along side with macros on TEX. They are the experimental apparatuses by which I test the applicability and feasibility of each system. From these macros arise yet other systems of lower levels which can be used for writing using only standard ASCII characters.

In other words, as a by-product of the development of these macros are writing systems which one can use to write in a normal email Daiï, Lāṇnạ, *etc*, using only the roman alphabet, while at the same time retaining, in the form of certain characters, the tonal marks and accents, and with these the exact meaning of the original texts.

Admittedly these still give a somewhat outlandish look, but to me they look less so than any other similar efforts that I have seen so far. Moreover they are more systematised and are easy to understand, and about as easy to use as *Pīn Yīn*.

Based on the graph theory, the coordination number of a language is defined to be the number of connections between one language and the others. Higher coordination numbers mean higher connectivities. This idea of connectivity and coordination number can also be applied to other things in the study of languages.

Because a word can have more than one meaning, if one consider words as being sites, and the same meanings between them as bonds within a network, then the number of bonds leading away from each site is the coordination number of that site and the word it represents.

On the other hand, one may think of two different kinds of sites, one representing the words while the other their abstract meanings. Then the sites of one kind can be mapped over to some sites of the other kind. This is similar to the previous case, where all sites are of the same kind, except that now each site of the second kind replaces the various bonds, in the former case, all of which have the same meaning. This reduction of duplicate bonds to unique items will come in handy when one comes to create a database for them. Since the sites of the second kind are all abstract description, their identities must be established in the form of definitions.

To me conventional languages, mathematics, and music are all languages. I treat each of them differently from the other no more than I treat Japanese differently from Daiï.

The brain, however, is divided into two hemispheres, the left and the right ones. The conventional languages as well as all the right-handed activities are looked after by the left hemisphere while geometrical languages and the left-handed activities by the right hemisphere.

Many great thinkers, for example Penrose and Hoyle, claim they think *visually*, the term used by Penrose for thinking in geometrical figures instead of in words, phrases or sentences. Obviously these great thinkers seldom read outside their specialised fields, or they have not done it enough, for their *controversial* issue whether one needs to think in words, or as sounds of the words, has already been answered at least as far back as the 16^{th} century by Cardan, or more likely more than a thousand of years before that by Plato in his *Cratylus*.

It is possible for a deaf-mute as well as for a congenitally blind person to form units of speech and to understand the interconnections among them. Moreover, not only that these units of speech need be no sounds, they even need be no words. Either this is the case, or our definition of words has to be extended to cover both the Braille and Sign languages.

The thinking in terms of combinations of abstract units instead of sounds is nothing short of a geometrical thinking. One only needs to start his first class of Sign language to see this, as I had done in 1998 the Japanese Sign language while in Japan.

I have never been particularly good at Sign, but I find that gradually one comes to a point where one no longer attach words with signs, and thinks fully in terms of the latter. Therefore Japanese Sign has got nothing to do with Japanese. You can say Japanese using standardised signs, but then it would no longer be Japanese Sign but a sign transcription of Japanese.

Also Japanese Sign is different from British Sign, French Sign, and German Sign for instance. Japanese Sign is, however, influenced by the Japanese culture. As an example, the sign which means *thank you* in Japanese Sign is a traditional gesture of a sumo, Sumo being a classic and national sport of Japan. There is nowhere else in the world where people know how to watch Sumo, so there is little chance that the sign will be understood elsewhere even though it sticks to your mind like nothing does if you relate it to Sumo. One may say that the sign is metaphoric.

The study of deaf or blind people, with relation to the time of the onset of these conditions in each case and to people who are normal, is an important key which will lead to a better understanding of the working of languages and the mind.

Languages are important because they are the only means by which we can be intelligent, by which we can be human. They are the things that bind the people of a community together and differentiate one community from the others. In modelling of a sociological network they are the things that decide

the topology of the clusters.

The brain is a hardware which may resemble a network of some sort. Control engineers have been trying relentlessly to model their neural network after the synaptic actions of the brain cells. I think that except for the similar name their effort seems to be moving further and further apart from what they are trying to model, so much so that now it seems to me reasonably safe to say that the neural network of Control System and that of Neurology are two totally different things.

I agree with Penrose that the brain is governed by quantum mechanics. Furthermore I think that understanding is the result of a percolation of some kind, therefore not localised to any specific point within the brain.

Some ten years ago I read about medical experiments which show that in every human, including polyglots, there is always an interval of tension when one switches from one language to another. The only difference between normal people and polyglots is in the length of this interval, which is much shorter in the latter than in the former. The finding claims detection of spikes in the electrical signal within the brain at such transitions.

If confirmed, this would show that the brain does not treat all languages as a single one but instead as different sets. At each switching from one language to another the brain somehow readjusts itself to accommodate the new language. The existence of the spike would confirm that this is a percolative process, since it separates the two phases of the brain from each other, namely the ones which accommodates the language before and after the switching.

At the time when I read about it, however, this study only explained what I thought was a most unusual and interesting, if not intriguing, experience. In the spring of 1990 while working in Budapest I happened one day to be standing in a queue in front of an embassy. I had on me a T-shirt which has the word *Bangkok* written in bold across the chest. One woman approached and asked me in Daiï whether I was a Daiï. I immediately understood what she said, but what gave me a cold sweat was that for as much as fifteen seconds all I could say in Daiï to answer her was a yes. Towards the end of the dreadful interval, which seemed to me an hour, I felt like fainting and had to squat down, and I think that she did the same. Then I asked her in my incoherent Daiï to forgive me for I told her I found myself unable suddenly to speak my own language!

Such had been my experience that when I read about the research work mentioned it suddenly dawned on me that what happened then was my first-hand experience of the *language switching shock*, which I am now happy to rephrase as the *phase transitional shock* of the brain. At the time when it happened I had been thinking wholly in English for three months. There had been absolutely no Daiïs around. In fact that lady was the only one I met there. This together with the unexpected nature of the meeting helps towards

producing a lasting impression.

That experience was not the only one either. The more languages I come to learn and use the oftener are my later experiences similar to it. But none of these has the degree comparable to that first one. In fact I notice them only because I had experienced *the real thing*, which they resemble though fall short of in comparison by a matter of orders. For example I find it equally at ease to speak either Lāṇṇạ or Daiï. But to switch back and forth between them is another matter which, not for want of practice, I still cannot do without a certain level of anxiety.

As another example, when I started this research in 2000 I shared the room C62 in the Mill with two other researchers, Daomin and Zoran. As I programme in Matlab I often find myself at times immersed and think in the language. Whenever this was the case and someone interrupted me with his conversation I would find myself for a brief period helplessly unable either to speak or to think in English.

When you look at your own computer programme written a long time ago it is not because you have yourself become less apt that you find it hard to understand. But rather it was because you need to get that state of mind when you wrote it to be able to understand it.

In other words, your self is no longer yourself unless it is in phase or in the same phase with it. Or should I say instead that your self is always yourself no matter how many possible phases it may have?

Such is a marvellous work of the human brain. One step out of control and we have what we call in medicine *multiple personalities* where a single brain could house several separate persons, or a lunatic who finds it impossible to switch from the other phase back to his sociable self, in tune with the reality.

Here it may not be irrelevant to quote a passage from Stirling's belated reply, dated 16^{th} April 1738 , to Euler's praising letter written 8^{th} June 1736 ,

> 'For after deliberations have been interrupted, not to say neglected, for a long time, patience is required before the mind can be brought to think about the same things once again.'

With the language of music, I conjecture without the necessary skill to proof that the theoretical activities of composing and orchestration is run by the left hemisphere while the sight-reading skill has more to do with the right hemisphere of the brain.

I have asked myself what the language of thought is, and what that of the unconscious thought. Although thinking is done consciously, I think that the percolative process which leads to discoveries or the understanding of something occurs in the unconscious activity of the brain which runs behind

the scene like background processes in Unix. Therefore a decisive answer or judgement may be conscious, but the activities leading up to it should have already taken place earlier as a percolation within the unconscious thought.

Thought itself may depend in some ways to the languages in which we think. Geometrical thinking could mean that the left hemisphere is doing most of the job, but it could also mean more than that. Languages are more than means to communicate information. They are the products of cultures and therefore are also information in themselves. When someone thinks in two situations using two different languages, he may be thinking a little differently each time. I find that my judgement changes, slightly I hope, but perceptibly depending on whether I am in a Daiï-, Lā̱nnā̱-, Japanese-, or English-speaking countries. This may have to do with the difference in the cultures or ways of life as much as the languages, and I think that the two cannot be easily separated.

As for the language of my thought, roughly speaking it was predominantly Lā̱nnā̱ during my childhood until 1983, then it was English or Daiï until 1996, and then Japanese or English until 1999, and thereafter it has been English. And even for the English language, since I was a child it must have been based on the language of, the Americans until about 1983, the Kiwis until 1985, the British until 2000, and then it could have been only the written language for me since I started to write and have to forget what I have learnt.

The matter of transliterations has always occupied my mind. The name of Daiï people can never be transliterated with sufficient satisfaction using any of the systems which exist now. Until 1985 or 1986 I used to write my name as *Tiyapun*. Aṃnạc, aka Ben, mentioned that *pun* is not a nice word in English and since there is no way I could go wrong writing it otherwise I changed it to the present *Tiyapan*, which is what he suggested.

Either in 1999 or a year before that, I had some further discussion with him on why names like mine one should not be written in English as *Gidtisagg Teeyapann*, which is about the closest to the Daiï pronunciation I could think of then, and why indeed could it not otherwise be written as *Kittixak Tiyapan*. My first name is quite a common name for the Daiïs and everybody writes it as *Kittisak* with an *s* not as *Kittixak* with an *x*, so if I wrote it as the latter I could make my name stand out from the crowd or so I reasoned.

His comment gave me my present trademark *Kittix* as he said it looks well. I agree that it does because it looks symmetric and balanced. Originally I thought about opting for '>:Kittix' as the sign for the trademark, the front parts being a pictorial symbol of a pair of knitted brows and two eyes in accord with the informal Internet convention of 90°counter clockwise rotation, which makes it look like `>:Kittix` in emails. But later I decided to keep it simple and only kept the term coined by Aṃnạc.

According to present transcription system which I have designed, my name

is *Kittiśakdżi Ṭiyábandḣ*, and my middle name *Nui* becomes *Nhŭï*. But I will leave my name as it is since it is a proper name and there is an exception for that in every language.

Such exception is very prominent in the case of the Japanese language where, strictly speaking, one could write for one's name any Kanji or Chinese character one likes and has it pronounced anything one wishes. In Japan, except in cases where there is a pronunciation written out in full, you are never absolutely certain whether you pronounce a name of your fellow countrymen rightly the way the owner of the name has in his mind. Although this posts no great a problem in these days when people tend not to make their names deviate from the norms, extending my present system to cover the Japanese transcription using the Roman alphabet is not easy. Chinese is much easier in comparison while French, German, and presumably all European languages should be yet simpler to deal with.

My aim is nothing less than making a similar transcription system which works well for each one of the languages in the Tai family, and then perhaps for languages in other families as well. Like something which percolates, I feel that my understanding of the problem has past its most crucial point and this aim would not be too farfetched now.

Kittiśakdżi is a word of Pali and Sanskrit origin which means *renown* (*kitti* is the Pali equivalent of Sanskrit *kirti*, *śakti* is Sanskrit for 'power', and *d́* is another Daiï way of representing the Sanskrit *t*), *Nhŭï* is probably Daiï in origin which also means *big* in Maori (*nui*), while *Ṭiyábandḣ* is a combination between Chinese and Pali which means *related to the Zhāng family.*

– gc –

Most names of the Daiï people nowadays are coined from words in Pali or Sanskrit imported from India. Daiïs rarely introduce themselves by their *real* names in everyday life. Instead we use a *nickname*, which is either a mistranslation or a misnomer from the Daiï word *jù̀elèn*. I think that the former rather than the latter is the case, that *jù̀elèn* has several meanings, one of which is *nickname*, and therefore that it should instead be translated either as *the other name* or as the *casual name*.

In contrast to the real names which are usually imported words as mentioned above, these casual names are generally Daiï in origin. Because Daiï is a monosyllabic language, the casual names are thus normally monosyllabic.

Apart from the real names tending to contain more syllables than the casual ones, and rather more beautiful, to a European or an English speaker they also tend to have a more familiar look. This is because both Pali and Sanskrit belongs to the Indo-European language family, the same family to which both Latin and Greek belong. Many languages in India now are descendants of Sanskrit, and quite a few Daiï names use the same words as, for instance, Hindi.

But for the difference in the methods of transcription, Daiï having no system to date as mentioned, many Daiï names would have looked similar to those of Indians. For example, the name 'Chandra' is more correctly written as 'Candra', and in the system proposed here would read 'Candṙ' in Daiï which, if written from a pronunciation, would probably read 'Jan'. In Pali, *canda* is the moon while *chanda* the love and contentment. Similarly my name 'Kittisak' when written using the present system as 'Kittiśakdżi' already looks closer to an Indian name.

Music is arguably the language of the mind. In the case of post-encephalitis patients who experience adverse effects from the L-DOPA (*cf* Oliver Sacks, *Awakenings*, Piccador, Pan Books, 1973 (1982)), music generally improves their conditions. Because these effects seem to be the reactions in the subconscious selves, the language of the subconscious mind is likely to be a music of some kind.

All living organisms have an underlying rhythms of life. Examples are breathing, heart beats, menstruation periods, and awakening-sleeping cycles. The mind, then, must likewise have rhythmic activities of its own. The only difference is that in case of the mind not only the rhythms, but also the melodies are important. Neither rhythms alone nor crooned melodies without rhythms improve the conditions of these patients, only melodies in combination with rhythms do. Not only animals, but plants too are affected or touched by music. When rose gardens install speakers to play soft, classical music it is intended not for visitors but for the roses.

The languages of thoughts, on the other hand, may be divided into three groups, that is conventional languages, geometrical languages, and music. Since all of these are languages, and since all languages are translations, when we come to understand more the profundity of the translation processes involved inside our mind we will come a step closer to understanding consciousness. And even though robots as we understand them now are never conscious, the conscientious line dividing between beings and things may be thinner than we may think.

We do not know whether such dividing lines, if they exist, mark a phenomenon of phase transitions of the percolation process. Before any artificial brain may become a separate consciousness we may need to understand more than we do now about the quantum processes (*cf* Penrose, 1989). † The difficulty experienced when we try to explain to someone a discovery or theorem that we discovered by intuition only confirms to us the importance of the translation processes.

The coordination numbers within and between languages become important if we want to build a network of languages. The coordination number of a

† Roger Penrose. *The emperor's new mind. Concerning computers, minds, and the law of physics.* 1989.

language reflects the affinity it has with other languages. This affinity may be taken, among other things, to be the writing system common to the others that the language has. Therefore English, French, German, Sanskrit, and other languages that have a well-defined Romanised system share the same coordination number with one another, which is also the coordination number of the writing system itself.

But a language may have more than one coordination numbers, each one of which it shares with the languages in the different groups it belongs to. Hindi and Sanskrit, for instance, while belonging to the same group with other Indo-European languages also form a separate group of their own through the Devanagari script shared between both.

Chinese, Japanese, and perhaps Korean belong to another group through the fact that all of them are based on the Chinese characters. Chinese and Japanese are disconnected, or weakly connected, to the Indo-European group because even though each of them has an excellent Romanised writing system, none of them can convey meanings accurately enough by using only this.

Korean, on the other hand, can be counted also as a member of the Indo-European group because it has now become nearly totally a syllabic language with the use of the Chinese characters confined to only for proper names.

The coordination numbers within each language is more complicated. They depend in no easily definable ways on the numbers of the words, meanings for each word, letters of the alphabet, consonants, vowels and inflections of sounds. These are different for both Chinese and Japanese where the number of the radicals and their combinations plays a dominant role, and in the case of Chinese the number of sounds and inflections.

Deaf children who have never been exposed to a language think in pictures, and when they are taught language for the first time show a tendency to use metaphors. Therefore starting from the higher layer of thought to the lower layer of mind seem to be the adjectives, similes, metaphors, and finally music. This may explain why music and poetry, with their rhythms, rhymes, and metaphors, can touch the heart far better than university textbooks. Also, seeing that they are good at thinking in pictures, I wonder whether deaf children would have a higher potential to excel in the areas of mathematics and physics than normal.

Language, even in the smallest sense of the word, that is including only the national languages of the world, is still very important since it is the thing which holds a society together and segregates one society from another. Even when this greatly limited definition is adopted, it still plays a major role in, for instance, culture and economics, and gives satisfactory explanations to diverse phenomena, for example culture shocks, economic crises, and the formation of economic, as well as political groups.

Language in its largest possible sense is exceedingly important since it turns

out to be the glue which binds things together, take as only one example the case of mathematics and logic as the languages of science.

Language comes in various modes and forms. Sign languages, for instance, are geometrical in nature. Congenitally deaf people think in spatial terms, and this explains why they often make a good mathematician (*cf* Sacks, 1989). †

It is interesting to note that this mode of thinking is quite usual even in hearing mathematicians and physicists, many of whom say that verbal thinking plays but a minor part in their more serious thinkings. But this claim is unnecessary if we think of verbal Language, Geometry, and Sign as all being languages.

There is as yet no writing systems for Signs that are easy to use. For this, I propose a writing system which uses the roman alphabet. I wish to develop such a system based on the following principles. Consonants represent the various body organs used, its forms and positions, while vowels the motions and movements. In other words, consonants represent those relevant things which are static in nature, whereas vowels those which are dynamic.

It is not unusual that a researcher may have a theme which recurs again and again in whatever he does, for example Galileo sees circles everywhere (*cf* Hankins, 1977). † My themes are language and percolation, and I see them everywhere I look. It should be mentioned that my definition of language covers that of Geometry and Mathematics.

Daiï has been through a few percolation-like phenomena. The currency crisis in 1997 was one. This in turn started a chain of crises in other countries all across the East Asian nations, and spread to as far as New Zealand. In this globalisation economics, one can even tell which countries belong to the same economic group by looking at the extent of the spread of crises like this. Essentially neither the United States nor Europe was affected in any way.

The traffic situation in Ḅaṇgkauk, on the other hand, had always been so bad until the onset of the crisis, to a degree that one would never have believed possible until one actually sees it. Both the traffic and the economic crises share common causes, one of which is the non-decentralisation. The economic crisis both has the same causes of, and is caused by the traffic crisis.

In 1996 I started to look at the percolation probability of the traffic network in Ḅaṇgkauk.

An economic model should be a network which has people as its entities.

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† Oliver Sacks. *Seeing Voices. A journey into the world of the deaf.* Piccador. Pan Books. 1989(1990).

† Thomas L Hankins. Triplets and triads. Sir William Rowan Hamilton on the metaphysics of mathematics. *Isis*, **68**, 242, 175–193, 1977.

It should be centred in men instead of in money. Existing macro- and micro-economic theories are centred around money and put too little emphasis on people. No doubt they can never explain economic transitions. Money is only the language of economies, never its structure, therefore a model based on money can be at best a model of a language, not a model of the structure. Language in general is the thing which binds structures together to form clusters.

If we accept this humanistic network as important in economic modelling, then we have to look at languages, for even though money may be the language of transactions and we could do well by studying its flow through the network of men, language is the thing which binds and segregate groups of people.

There is no racism except that which arises from the difference in languages. For example, there are no Irish communities in Australia comparable to those which exist in Manchester because every Irish descendants over there speaks Aussie, with which they identify themselves, nor would the Chinese descendants in Daiï say themselves Chinese for the very reason, though they may not realise it, that they have never learnt Chinese.

If Language binds society together, then what is the thing that binds languages together? Linguistically the answer may be the common historical background, languages of the same family are in a way bound together; but practically it must be the writing. This explains why not only Chinese and Daiï seem to be out of tune with a western mind, but also even the German language before both Wars with its typefaces containing in effect only two special characters, namely those for *sz* and *tz*, may appear to be Greek; and of course there is the Greek language itself with its unique script.

Signs are usually thought of as being different from verbal languages, not because the two are in actuality different from each other but because they cannot be written, especially with the roman alphabet. Both Chinese and Japanese have their excellent phonetic transcription in roman characters, respectively called *Pīn Yīn* and *Rōmaji*, but apart from the imitation of sounds neither of these allows one to write anything meaningful.

Daiï have never had a passable phonetic, let alone writing system in roman alphabet. I have developed roman writings for Daiï and Lą̄nną̄. I have drawn an outline of my plan to develop those for Japanese and Chinese, and have so far done some works along this line. I plan to develop a writing system for Signs which should even allow one to pronounce the words should one wishes to; each such enunciation would contain the essential spatial information.

How a writing system can act as a glue in a language should be clear to people whose first language is Chinese. Here is a language whose different dialects are completely different from one another as to be incomprehensible, but whose people, wherever they may live across the globe, feel that they belong to a single and the same culture, all because of the writing.

On 12 April 2002 I am back in Daiï and in *Jiangmhăị*. We go together in *Nhăung*'s car to *Ạuḅkhạn*, which is a national park which covers *Hạngd́ong, Mạe Vạng*, Samoeng and *Sanpặtaung*. There are five of us including my brother and my parents.

The country around here are igneous and limestone rocks. This is the source of the *Khạn, Vạng* and Vin rivers. Mountains in Daiï are from the Precambrian Period, which is the oldest of rocks on earth dated from the formation of the crust to approximately 600 million years ago. These includes the Puï and the *Sudẹb* mountains down to the southern part of Daiï. There is a precipitous gorge 30 metres high corroded by the Khạn River like the Grand Canyon by the Colorado River in Arizona.

We drive along the Highway Number 121 for 15 kilometres, then turn right and drive on another 10 kilometres. Parts of the road are unpaved and winding. At one point the engine stops when we are in the middle of an ascent and I tell my sister how to negotiate a slope.

You put on your handbrake, start the engine, engage it in the first gear and then slowly release the clutch pedal while depressing the accelerator pedal until the you feel no weight of the car on the handbrake. At this point the transmission power may replace the handbrake and you may safely release the latter before accelerating the car forwards.

From the car park of *Ạuḅlhoang* we walk about half a kilometre to the gorge.

The KhSMK in Ḅạngkauk now has day-passes and term-tickets for the buses. The normal day-pass costs ten *ḅạd*s while the ones which also cover their air-conditioned vehicles (PA) is 30 *ḅạd*s. The weekly ticket is 50 *ḅ* and the PA one 150 *ḅ*, whereas the month-ticket costs 200 *ḅạd*s or 600 *ḅạd*s for the PA's.

Buses at this time are namely

No 1, which goes from the Tok Road to the Tian Pier
No 2, Saṃrọng–Pạkglaung Tlạd́
No 3, Mhạujit 2–Sạn Canal
No 4, Glaung Toeï Wharf–Bhạṣịcroeñ Pier
No 5, Prẹm Pier–Cakrvarrd́i
No 6, Bra Prad́ạeng–Ḅạng Laṃbhụ
No 7, Kvạng Canal–Họa Laṃbọng
No 7 K, Buddhmoṇḍol 2–Cakrvarrd́i
No 11, Pravẹṣ–Mạḅuñgraung
No 12, Hòaï Khvạng–Ministry of Commerce
No 13, Glaung Toeï–Hòaï Khvạng
No 15, The Mall at Dà-bra–Ḅạnglaṃbhụ
No 16, Śrịṇrongġ Garage–Survongśx
No 18, Iṭh Pier–Victory Monument

No 20, Bra Cul Fort–Ḍindạeng Pier
No 21, Dùng Gru Flats–Culạlongkaurṇ
No 22, Sạdhupradịṣṭh Garage–Bọdhikàeö Garage
No 23, Saṃrọng–Dẹvẹśṅ
No 24, Prajạnivẹśṅ 3–Victory Monument
No 25, Brạekṣạ Garage–Jāng Pier
No 26, Miṇḅurị–Victory Monument
No 29, Rangsit–Họa Laṃbọng
No 32, Pạkkredˊ–Bọdhi Temple
No 34, Rangsit–Họa Laṃbọng
No 36, Hòaï Khvạng–Sĭ Brayạ
No 36 K, Bọdhikàeö Garage–Sĭ Brayạ
No 37, Cạengrāun–Mảhạnạg
No 39, Dharrmśạstṙ University at Rangsit–Snạm Loang
No 42, Bra Pier–Sao Jingjā Circle
No 45, Saṃrọng–Rạjprasongġ
PA 45 K, Pạknāṃ–Henry Dunant
No 47, Glaungtoeï Wharf–Ministry of Land
No 49, Mhạujit–Sạmyạek–Họa Laṃbọng
No 50, Bra Rạm 7–Lumbinị Park
No 53, Dẹvẹśṙ Circle
No 54, Hòaï Khvạng Circle
No 59, Rangsit–Snạm Lhoang
No 60, Soan Sïạm–Pạkglaung Tlạd́
No 62, Sạdhupradịṣṭha–Victory Monument
No 63, Nảgaur Indṙ–Victory Monument
No 65, Pạknāṃ Temple in Nondḅurị–National Theatre
No 66, Prajạnivẹśṅ 2–Southern Coach Station
No 67, Smian Nạrị Temple–Jàung Nondrị
No 68, Smạe Daṃ–Bạng Laṃbhụ
No 70, Prajạnivẹśṅ 3–Snạm Lhoang
No 71, Soan Sïạm–Dhạtudaung Temple
No 72, Glaungtoeï Wharf–Dẹvẹśṙ
No 73, Hòaï Khvạng–Buddh Bridge
No 73 K, Bọdhikàeö Garage–Hòaï Khvạng–Buddh Bridge
No 75, Buddhḅujạ Temple–Họa Laṃbọng
No 76, Dhonḅurị Housings–Bloencit
No 77, Sạdhupradịṣṭh–Northern Coach Terminal
No 79, Tlĭngjan–Rạjprasongġ
No 80, Śrịnoaldharrmvimol–Snạm Lhoang
No 80 K, VPA 11 Village–Dà (pier) Bra
No 82, Bra Pradạeng–Bạng Laṃbhụ
No 84, Àumyhặị–Glaung Sạn
No 84 K, Mảhidol–Glaung Sạn
No 90, Śrẹṣṭhkic–Snạm Lhoang

No 91 K, Snạm Lhoang 2–Bra Pier
No 93, SEA Games Participants' Village–Sĭ Brayạ
No 95, Rangsit–Rạmgaṃhạeng University
No 96, Soan Sïạm–Sao Jingjā
No 97, Nondḅurị–Songġh Hospital
No 99, Śrịyạ̀n Pier–Laṃ Sạlị Junction
No 101, Mòang Temple–Ḅạng Mod́
PA 102 Express, Pạknāṃ–Central Department Store at Bra Rạm 3
No 105, New Town Mảhạjaï–Glaung Sạn
No 107, Ḅạng Khẹn Garage–Glaungtoeï Wharf
No 111, Blụ Market–Ḅugglọ Circle
No 112, Śrịṇrongġ–Victory Monument
No 114, Khẹmạ Garage–Laṃlụkkạ Junction
No 117, Hòaï Khvạng–Khẹmạ–Nond Pier
No 122, Hòaï Khvạng–Rạmgaṃhạeng University 1–Mhạujit
No 126, Ḅạng Khẹn Garage–Rạm. U. 1
No 129, Ḅạng Khẹn Garage–Saṃrọng
No 134, New Mhạujit–Ḅạng Ḅọadaung
No 134 K, Ministry of Commerce–Glaung Căn Housings
No 136, Customs Department–Ctucakr Park–New Mhạujit
No 137, Rạmgaṃhạeng–Rajd́ạbhiṣẹk Circle
No 138, Mhạujit 2–Bra Pradạeng
No PA 139 Express, Victory Monument–Rạm. Campus
No 140, Victory Monument–Dhonḅurị Housings
PA 141 Express, New Town Mảhạjaï–Culạ́. U.
No 142, Dhonḅurị Housings–Lao Temple–Pạknāṃ
No 145, New Mhạujit–Pạknāṃ
No 156, Strịvidyạ 2–Lạd́brāö–Rạm Indrạ Circle
No 165, Buddhmoṇḍol Sạï 3–Snạm Lhoang
No 166 Express, Muangdaung Village–Victory Monument
No 168, Soan Sïạm–Victory Monument, or Rạmgaṃhạeng–Mịnḅurị–Soan Sïạm
No 178, Kṣẹtr–Noalcandṛ Circle
No 179, Bra Rạm 7 Bridge–ASMD Junction
No 180 Express, Sạdhupradíṣṭḥ–Rạm. U. 2
No PA 185, Rangsit–Glaungtoeï
No 203, Nondḅurị–Snạm Loang
No 204, KDM 2–Rạjvongśx Pier
No 205, Customs Department–The Mall at Dàbra
No 206, Kṣẹtr University–*zauï* (lane) Ud́omsukh
No 207, Rạm. U. 1–Rạm. U. 2
PA 501, Mịnḅurị–Pạkglaung Tlạd́
PA 502, Mịnḅurị–Sịlom
PA 503, Rangsit–New Southern Coach Station
PA 504, Rangsit–Soan Dhonḅurịromẏa

PA 505, Pạkkreḍ–Vongvian Ỵhăị
PA 508, Pạknāṃ–Rạjvaurdiṣṭḥ Pier
PA 509, Nondḅuriị–Ḅạng Gạe–Mòang Temple
PA 510, Rangsit–Bra Praḍạeng, or Dharrmśạstṙ U. at Rangsit–Songġh Hospital
PA 511, Pạknāṃ–New Southern Coach Station
PA 512, New Mhạujit–Pạkglaung Tlạḍ
PA 513, Rangsit–Pŭcào Smingbrạï
PA 514, Suvindvongśx–Sukhạbhiḅạl 3–Siḷom
PA 515, Victory Monument–Mảhidol U. at Śạlạỵạ
PA 516, Dẹvẹśṙ–Ḅạng Ḅọadaung
PA 517, New Northern Coach Station–Lạḍ Kraḅang
PA 517 Red, New Northern Coach Station–Lạḍ Kraḅang Institute of Technology
PA 518, Victory Monument–Ḅọakhạö Village
PA 519, Central Department Store at Bra Rạm 3–Soan Sïạm
PA 519 Red, Càoguṇ Dảhạr Road–Glaungtoeï
PA 520, Dharrmśạstṙ U. at Rangsit–Rạm. U. 1
PA 521, Nondḅuriị Pier–Bra Praḍạeng
PA 522, Rangsit–Victory Monument
PA 536, *Śrị Ảyudhyạ*–Pạknāṃ
PA 543, Khẹmạ Garage–Laṃ Lụkkạ.

There are also non-KhSMK buses, but they are likely to lose the ground unless they could catch up with some kinds of term-tickets or day-passes soon. This is true with buses in, for instance, Manchester anyway. These buses available now are namely

PA 7, Śuekṣạ Nạriị–Họa Laṃbọng
No 8, Happyland Market–Buddh Bridge
No 9, Bhạṣịcroeñ–Śrịyản–Sạmsẹn Station
No 10, Bhạṣịcroeñ–Nạnglōeng
No 14, Śrịyản–Jàung Nondrị
No 17, Cạengrāun–Victory Monument
No 19, Tlĭngjan–Dẹvẹśṙ Circle
No 27, Miṇḅuriị–Victory Monument
No 28, Southern Coach Station–Rajyọdhin
No 29, Rangsit–Họa Laṃbọng
No 30, Nondḅuriị–Southern Coach Station
No 33, Pdumdhạṇị–Snạm Lhoang
No 35, Sạdhupraḍiṣṭḥ–Sao Jingjậ
No 38, Rạjbhaḍ at Candrkṣẹm–Rạmgaṃhạeng University 2
PA 38, Mhạujit 2–Rạmgaṃhạeng University 2
PA Sạï 38, Śuekṣạnạriị–Ḅạng Laṃbhụ
No 39, Dharrmśạstṙ University at Rangsit–Snạm Loang

No 40, Southern Coach Station–Họa Lambọng
No 43, Śuekṣạnạrị–Glaungsạn Pier
No 44, Governmental Housings–Happyland–Tịan Pier
No 48, Rạmgaṃhạeng University 2–Bọdhi Temple
No 51, Pạkkreḍ–Bạng Bọ, or Pạkkreḍ–Central Department Store at Lạḍbrāẁ
No 52, Pạkkreḍ–Bạng Zụe Station, or Pạkkreḍ–Mhạujit 2 (Northern Coach Station at Ctucakr), or Pạkkreḍ–Hòaï Khvạng Market
No 56, Krung Dhon Bridge–Bạng Laṃbhụ
No 57, Dhonbụrị–Southern Coach Station
No 58, Mịnbụrị–Pratụnāṃ
No 64, Snạmbịn Nāṃ–Snạm Loang
No 68, Smạe Daṃ–Bạng Laṃbhụ
No 69, Snạmbịn Nāṃ–Victory Monument
No 81, Àumnāuï–Bra Pĭnklào Bridge
No 83, Tlĭngjan–Rạjḍaṃnoen College of Commerce in Dhonbụrị
PA 84, Àumẏhăị–Cạengrāun Temple
No 85, Cạengrāun Temple–Họa Laṃbọng
No 88, Dùng Gru–Lạḍẏà
No 89, Bạngkauk Technical School–Vongvian Ỵhăị (big roundabout)
No 90, Pdumdhạnị–Siam Commercial Bank's head quarter
No 92, Glaung Tan–Songġh Hospital
No PA 92, Lạḍ Kraḅang Station–Victory Monument
No 98, Hòaï Khvạng–Klòaï Nāṃdai, or Hòaï Khvạng–Bejrbụrị
No 99, Śrịyàn Pier–Laṃ Sạlị Junction
No 104, Pạkkreḍ Pier–Mhạujit 2
No 108, The Mall at Dà Bra–Rajyọdhin Junction
No 109, Glaung Kŭm–Họa Laṃbọng
No 110, Bra Rạm 7–Dẹvẹśŕ
No 113, Mịnbụrị–Họa Laṃbọng
No 115, Soan Sïạm–Sịlom
No 116, Snạmḍạeng–Sạdaur
No 120, Màhạjaï New Town–Glaung Sạn
No 123, Àumẏhăị–Snạm Lhoang
No 124, Màhiḍol at Śạlạyạ–Snạm Lhoang
No 125, Sạmsẹn Station–*Ratnàkọsindŕ Sombhọj Bvaurnivẹś* at *Śạlạyạ*
No 127, Àruṇ Amrindŕ–Bạng Bọadaung
No 129, Bạng Khẹn Garage–Saṃrọng
No 131, Mịnbụrị–Nhaung Cauk
No 132, Bạng Cạk–Bạng Blị Housings
No 133, Bra Khnọng–Bạng Blị Housings
No 139 Express, Rạm. U. 2–Victory Monument–New Mhạujit
No 143, Happyland–Lạḍ Kraḅang Institute of Technology
No 144, Mịnbụrị Market–Ròmklào
No 146, Bạng Gạe–Outer Ring Road Circle

No 147, Ḍạwganaung–Outer Ring Road Circle
No 149, Tlĭngjan–Glaungtoeï
No 150, Pạkkreḍ–The Mall at Bạng Kapi, or Pạkkreḍ–Rạm. U. 1
PA Sạï 150, Pạkkreḍ–Rạm. U. 1
No 151, Lạḍbrậö 71–Miṇburị–Họatakhệ̀
No 152, Happyland–Sukhạbhiḅạl 3–Ròmklào Housings
No 154, Vajrạbol Housings (Gẹha)–Glaungtoeï
No 157, Àumyhặị–Hòaï Khvạng Market
PA 157, Àumyhặị–New Mhạujit
No 159, New Southern Coach Station–Mhạujit 2
No 162 Blue, Glaungtoeï–Sïạm
No 162 Red, Glaungtoeï–Survongśx
No 163, Buddhmoṇḍol Sạï 4–Hòaï Khvạng
No 164, Buddhmoṇḍol Sạï 4–Victory Monument
No 169, Bạng Khundian–Pĭnklào–Vongvian Ỵhặị Circle
PA 170, Àumnāuï–Snạm Lhoang–New Mhạujit Coach Station
No 174, Happyland–Kạñcṇạbhiṣẹ̣k Road–Buddhmoṇḍol 4
No 175, Blụ Market–Nond Pier–ATK 3
PA 177, Bạng Bọadaung–Victory Monument Circle
No 182, Rạm. U. 2–New Mhạujit
PA 183, Àumyhặị–Buddhmoṇḍol Sạï 2–Mhạujit 2
No 201, Victory Monument–Snạm Loang–Tlĭngjan
No 338, Rangsit–Pratụnāṃ Bra Indŕ
No 356, Dharrmśạstŕ University at Rangsit–Pạkkreḍ
No 365, Pạknāṃ–Bạng Prakong Power Station
No 367, Pạkkreḍ Pier–Rangsit
PA 506, Pạkkreḍ–Bra Pradạeng
PA 507, Pạknāṃ–New Southern Coach Station
PA 523, New Mhạujit–Rạjmonggol School of Technology at the 6th Canal
PA 525, Miṇburị Market–Mitrmaitrị Road–Nhaung Cauk Market
PA 526, Miṇburị Market–Rạṣḍŕ Udiś Road–Nhaung Cauk Market
PA 529, Smạe Ḍaṃ–Central Department Store at Lạḍbrậö
PA 530, Smạe Ḍaṃ–Happyland
PA 538, *Śrị Ảyudhya*–Rạjmonggol School of Technology–Pdum.
PA 545, Nondḅurị–Saṃrọng.

There are also minibuses which includes

No 11 K, Phạsukh Village–Pratụnāṃ
No 40, Southern Coach Station–Họa Lambọng
No 43, Pĭndaung Market–Dẹvẹśŕ
No 44, Governmental Housings–Happyland–Tịan Pier
No 46, Rạmgaṃhạeng University 2–Raungmuang
No 48, Rạmgaṃhạeng University 2–Bọdhi Temple

No 74, Hòaï Khvạng–Glaungtoeï.

The microbuses charges you a constant fee regardless of how far you go. To date there are 14 different routes, namely

No 1 from Pạkkred́ to Ṣịlom
No 2, Fashion Island–Ḍạögnaung
No 3, Sïạm Park–Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel
No 4, Họamhạk Sports Complex–Southern Coach Station
No 5, Future Park at Bạng Gạe–Northern Coach Station
No 6, Central Department Store at Bạngnạ–Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel
No 8, Sïạm Park–Southern Coach Station
No 10, The Mall at Bạng Gạe–Bạngkapi
No 12, Rose Garden (Sạm Brạn Garden)–Northern Coach Station
No 14, Smudrprạkạr–Vongvian Ỵhăị
No 15, Smudrprạkạr–Northern Coach Station
No 16, Future Park–Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel
No 17, Sïạm Park–Shangri-la Hotel
No 20, The Mall at Bạng Kapi–Bạng Rak.

Apart from these there are 117 vans linking together the various places in Bạngkauk.

The Kiwi people call the university a *varsity*, some of the British youngsters call it an *uni*. The Daiïs like to truncate the last vowel of a word, for instance *Rạma* becomes *Rạm*. If the syllable before it has a final consonant, the whole of the final phoneme could become silent, for instance *śakd́i* (honour) which becomes *śakd́xi*.

The reason for this seems to be because Daiï words are always mono-syllabic, therefore imported words especially those from Pali or Sanskrit are shortened to reduce it to one syllable. As an example of this consider *ratana* (jewels) which becomes the mono-syllabic word *ratṅ*.

You are given no priorities if you are driving a bus in Daiï. Nobody will let you pull out, you will have to fight for yourself.

But the driver is never alone on the bus. There is his partner who takes the money from you or look at your day-pass or term-ticket which ever one you have. He or she is called *krapáo* (pocket) for an obvious reason.

These people were fifteen years ago more nimble and petulant. I used to look and marvel at them when they tilt themselves at a seemingly hazardous angle. The driver would drive relentlessly on, but while never holding on to anything at no time did his partner lose his balance. His body would sway to and fro like reeds in the wind, automatically aligning itself according to the

direction and magnitude of the acceleration of the bus. When it decelerated his body would tilt backwards as though there was a strong wind coming from behind, and when accelerated it would forwards as if now the wind came from in front instead.

Recently the language they use has become standardised and thereby uninteresting.

When I come to Daiï from Manchester on 23 December 2002 I have to run to the Piccadilly bus station to catch the 43A to the airport. The Singapore Airline flies off from Terminal 2, so I need to walk a long way.

Last night I had not slept. I had just discovered how to do the indexing and the tables in TEX, but it was already too late to get it printed out in time to catch the plane. Anyway it is the culmination of TEX. This can be any listing of items each of which may contain a sublist, for instance the list of completed works listed by year where each year may have more than one works. You give a running number, an opus number, to each item and number those that are in the same year, then two commands, one at the beginning to just read in the opus definitions, doing nothing else, and another to list all the opera at the end. The tables, for example the table of contents, list of figures, *etc*, are much more complicated because you need to know what values will be read into the memory when you read inside a paragraph, in a group, *etc*, and this still confuses me.

I like the Campari with orange juice.

There is going to be the world jamboree for scouts in Daiï in 2003, which is only a few days away. For me, flying is the time to relax and reflect. Here we are in Zurich but not allowed to get off the plane. There is an ice hotel in Sweden, in a small village of Jukkasjärvi near Kiruna where there is the space research. The place is inside the Arctic Circle. The hotel and all its furniture are made from ice blocks. Inside the room the temperature is 3–6°C. The hotel only exists between November and April after which it melts away.

I think dry vermouth is probably the worst drink on earth!

You could die from Deep Vein Thrombosis, or DTV, the blood poisoning caused by sitting for too long in an aeroplane's seat, only the economy class one that is. In Australia people have been suing airlines, including QANTAS. But the British says this is no accidents.

Really I think Mozart is for the piano concertos while Beethoven the sonatas.

I arrive in Singapore, and then put my name down for the free tour, the Free New Asia-Singapore Tour. It is sponsored by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore, the Singpore Tourism Board (STPB) and the Singapore Airlines (SIA).

It is the Christmas Eve today. There is a nice orchid garden, with plenty of

explanations, here at the Changi Airport. The Mokara or Mokara Wai Liang, bred by C Y Mok in 1969, has five petals of yellow with red dots on them. Each flower is actually the inflorescence of flowers. There are varieties like the Mokara Chark Kuan, Mokara Mak Chin On, and Mokara Willie How.

The scientific name for the moth orchid is Phalaenopsis, from the Greek *phalaina* (moth) and *opsis* (appearance). Here the petals are white or purple. The orchid is in the family Orchidaceae, both words being from *orchis* which is Greek for the male reproductive organ. Orchids are used as antidepressants, stimulants and aphrodisiacs.

Also here there are Koi ponds. The Koi is the carp, in French *carpe* and in German *Karpfen*. Its scientific name is *Cyprinus carpio*. The Showa Sanshoku has three colours, namely black and red on white.

In the context of the percolation theory, a on b means that b has percolated but not a. This is the same as, 'a against b in the background'. The Kin Matsubara, or literally *golden metallic pine cone*, is in rich gold with scales that have a colour like that of the pine cone. The Kohaku is said to be in red and white, but turns out to be orange *on* white. It is popular in Japan. There is also the Shiro Utsuri, which is white on black.

The sunflower garden is on the third floor of Terminal 2. Sunflowers are *Helianthus spp*. They are planted here in the outdoor garden with plenty of sun. There are also beds of the Trailing Daisy, *Wedelia Trilobata*, which is used to alleviate symptoms of cold and flu, and is ideal for use as ground cover because it tolerates heat well.

I change some money. On the front of the $2 note here is the picture of Yusof bin Ishak, while on the back something is written about education. The Gibraltar's pound coin I have had in my pocket for a while, reluctant always to use it. On its tail side is the relief in the picture of two crenellated towers and a wall, together forming a shape of the letter U.

We go in two coaches to the Singapore River and make a circuit cruise there. One of the two Indians who came from the US says that he has lived and worked there for a few years. I am surprised, for he has no drawl in his accent. 'You don't talk like an American', I observe, to which he replies, 'I never try to have the accent'.

American make-believe works perhaps because deep inside we all want it to work. The US pulls 50 countries together under a federal government, draws the best brains from the world over to work for them.

Our guide explains to us about Feng Shui (wind and water), that architectural and interior designing rules of thumb in order to make your prosperity tick. Thus premises may have a large fountain in front of them, and inside the water falling down the walls. This is the core of it, but there are many other elements and details. One may call it superstitious, like Coleridge's albatross.

This free tour to the city is called BOAT. I met Jean, our guide, at the south free-tour point.

You would be ignorant if you were a Singaporean and did not know Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781–1826). He was a colonial administrator for the British Empire who was born in Jamaica. He founded Singapore in 1819 while he was the governor of Sumatra (1818–23), and in so doing secure for his Empire the control of Malaya. He had served in the British East India Company and had taken part in the capture of Java from the Dutch in 1811. He also wrote a history of Java in 1817, knighted that very year, and in 1826 founded the Zoological Society of London.

The East India Company is a commercial company, chartered by Queen Elizabeth I, from 1600 to 1858. It was given a monopoly of trade between England and the Far East. It ruled a large part of India during the 18^{th} century when a form of dual control of the colony was established by Pitt's India Act of 1784 that gives the power to both the company and the committee which reports to the Parliament in London. In 1834 its monopoly of China trade ended, and in the India Act of 1858 ended its control over the British India after the Indian Mutiny in 1857.

The Indian Mutiny, also known as the Sepoy Rebellion, which lasted from 1857 to 1858 is the uprising by Sepoys (Indian soldiers) from Bengal to Panjab in the north to the central India.

Singapore has no rivers. What is called today as the Singapore River is in fact the sea. Similar to canals in Venice, it is the canal dug to lead the sea water into the land.

When we are back at the airport, one passport is found to be missing. Someone has not handed in his passport again. This time only one, but last time there were three people doing this. We all left our passport at the airport before we came on this tour.

I have plenty of time to wait for my plane, so I come along again to another similar tour. It is not the same as the one I went with Jean because this time Salma takes us to the Sentosa. She explains to us about Feng Shui. The word 'sentosa' is Malay for *peace*. In Feng Shui you have water flowing inwards, for that means the retention of prosperity.

We are driving on the highway that was built on reclaimed land. This is also the case with the Changi Airport itself and the large open space on the opposite side of the bay front where future offices are planned. All the infrastructures are already installed, including the Mass Rapid Transport, the Singaporean equivalent of the tube. Raffles came here in 1819, and soon reclaimed 25 per cent more land.

Sentosa used to be known by a different name when the pirates lived there. When the British developed it they found skulls. Independence of the country came in 1965. Between 1942 and 1945 Singapore was under Japan's rule.

Earth was bought first from Malaysia, and then when that country would sell no more to them, from Indonesia.

I find the theatre on the third floor where you can sit and watch films free of charge. I watch the Pinocchio, and think it rather spooky to see a boy gradually transformed into a puppet before my very eyes. So much for the computer techniques we have now! Pinocchio was written in Italian by Collodi in 1883.

On the plane to Ḅạngkauk I watch Nicholas Cape in 'The Family Man', this time in English, and I have no clues why I should always listen to him in French earlier. This time I order a Drambuie and a Cointreau. The drambuie is a registered trademark and a type of Scottish whisky liqueur. I soon find out that the Campari orange rules anytime. I have one fruit spritzer only to find that it is just a mixture of different fruit juices.

This plane goes to Narita after it stops in Ḅạngkauk, so there are many Japanese people. A Daiï business man who sits beside me says that his name is Jack. He could have studied at the Science Faculty of the Cuĺạlongkaurṇ University, but decided to go to the *Bạṇijyàkạr Ḱoenrua* (navigational commerce) school instead.

According to our percolation theory all changes are percolation (of course). It is not so difficult to see this if we consider these changes as a change of phase where, for example, water turns into ice and vice versa, and a peaceful society turns into mutiny. The Sepoy Rebellion mentioned above is only one example as such, but here as usually is the case the event that triggers it is thought to be absurdly small, which makes the big event that follows it all the more nonsensical and unimaginable.

The unexplainable nature of a phase change, for example why the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour and why the Germans followed Hitler like idiots, can and only could be explained from the view point of what goes on inside the social structure not at the critical point but during the conceptions and incubation period since well before those certainty of an event's. Unrest gathers by unseen degrees. When it is ripe it will definitely percolate through, when it will show off an either spectacular or flabbergasting event. What event triggers it is of no consequences whatsoever.

If we accept that creations are percolation and vice versa, then according to the Big Bang theory the universe percolated at that first creation from the singularity. The universe may either be expanding forever, stationary, or contracting after having expanded for a while. One knows this by looking at the constant that is named after Edwin Powell Hubble (1889–1953).

The trouble is the value of this Hubble constant is so controversial one had better call it a Hubble variable. However, were the universe to contract, everything will come together again one day when the destruction, the reverse Big Bang or reverse creation, will ensue. This point too must be a percolation

point.

All our understanding fails us at a point close enough to the original singularity. Our imagination fails us well before we leave the front steps, but our present theory gives us some appreciation of the time as early as 10^{-43} second after the Big Bang. I doubt that the science based on our experience will let us understand our singular original.

God's work is also a creation and a singularity, since He creates the world out of nothing. But here, simply because His attributes are not definite, His Creation is limited to neither the Planck time nor, for that matter, to the Big Bang itself.

Our forefathers knew that the heaven is up there where the stars are. Jesus tells us, 'Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or there; believe it not (Matthew: 24.23),' and then, 'Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not (Matthew: 24.25, 26)'.

Christ is nowhere to be found since he is here inside each of us, provided that we believe his words. In the point of view of someone who does not believe his findings, he has long ceased to exist, that is to say, he is long deceased. What he has found the Old Testament already knows. So he confirms what the OT says, that there is only one Father, and adds that for each of us there is also only one Master, that is our own self, and that we are all brothers. This results in the relationships among us that defy all the social conventions we know.

We must understand him, therefore, when he says, 'But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven (Matthew: 23.8, 9)'.

Since all of us are star's dust, whatever creates the universe creates us. The whole universe has only one Father, and it follows that both the parents and the child have a common Father. Most of us, unable to live with this (before we know the explanation), write the original Father with the capital F to distinguish it from our respective earthly parents.

It is difficult to say whether what Christ has discovered is the same as the Enlightenment of Buddhism. One thing at least is enjoyed in both Buddhism and Christianity, that is the fact that neither the former's Enlightenment nor the latter's God is well defined. The only way to explain this is that both are singularity which is out of the universe's experience let alone ours, therefore neither the God nor the Enlightenment comes with a definition. We may define our manager, but how could one possibly describe *our* Creator.

He (here I personify) is a part of each of us, for otherwise the very idea of creating something out of nothing would lead to a paradox. But since we cannot even see our own nose, how do you expect to see Him. Our eyes are

only for looking at other things that He created.

Since each of us is a master of himself †, we should never put our self above other people. Consequently one should call oneself a master of nobody else, and should humble himself. No one is greater than anyone, and my only master and servant is myself.

Whether those people who wrote the New Testament knew about it we shall probably never know, but Jesus has to die in order to save us. Before the Crucifixion people either hated or followed him.

In the post-Easter Christianity we believe in the Christ within ourselves, that is to say, the idea that Jesus has passed on to us. He wants us to be saved, and therefore Peter had to deny him thrice before the cock crow. For those of us who believe in himself, his teaching will ring the bell and leads to the discovery of God and that part of the Creator in us which binds us with the whole matter of the universe.

In a way the twelve disciples of Christ are less lucky than us because they followed Jesus until his death while the only Jesus that works is the same which we find in ourselves through his teaching. For in Matthew 21.23 he told the Zebedee's sons and their mother, You will indeed drink My cup, but to sit at My right and My left is not Mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father. It is impossible for them to sit beside themselves if they accept the 'Me' that he meant.

The day of Judgement is after our death. Then he who believes will come to the Father as Christ does. He becomes one with the universe and is felt by those people who believe, and for this lives forever. Not all of us will come to understand this, 'But many now first will be last, and the last will be first (Matthew: 19.30)'.

Some dentists are wicked. I am unlucky when in March 2003 I have the gold inlay in my upper right first molar checked, not by dentist students as I usually did but by their teacher. She may be a lecturer but she must be worse than most of her students.

Two dentists in Manchester, that is Julia and Mr Rose, both said less than one year ago that although the gold is not well fixed there is no need to do anything now. One should wait for a sign of leakage first.

Now Candrcrị looks at the bite-view x-ray film, which still looks exactly the same as those being looked at by the two British dentists mentioned, but immediately says that it has leaked and must be removed 'to see what the underneath is like.' Even before removing it she says she wants to do a root treatment, to which I say 'No' by the look of its familiar internal image.

So for an enormous fee she removes the gold. 'It still looks well under-

† Here 'he' means a human being in general.

neath', she says, but still stoutly maintains it has decayed when asked. Then under the anaesthetic she strongly insisted she unnecessarily removes all the surrounding good dentine. Just before she takes the impression I ask to see what my tooth looks like, and when I see it in the mirror I say, 'Why, there's a big hole now'.

So she goes on to take away another side of the tooth, which makes it opened in three sides now instead of two previously. Doing this without asking for my consent despite my having several times from the start that I want least parts of the tooth taken must clearly be against all codes of practice of a dentist.

For the temporary fixing while waiting for the lab to make the composite inlay, a permanent composite material is used, but for three weeks, that is from 12 March to 2 April, my tooth is suspiciously so sensitive to anything. As though the whole thing is not already bad enough, the receipt for the first day is horrendous in its amount and contains fictitious items all over the place. In it my tooth has been root-treated, and the permanent composite used makes it even more expensive.

On that latter date when I see her again to have the thing fitted. She grates away at the dentine without any anaesthetic, which leaves me traumatised for the whole day, with the after-shock another week thereafter.

The Daiï New Year is during 13 to 15 April, just before Easter. Because it is mid-summer in Daiï, there is a water festival where you pour water on people. This year the virus causing Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome arrives for the first time just before the festival. If this is the same as other new viruses which come from outer space and comets as Hoyle says they do, it seems to have been able to established a reservoir on Earth as they say it is contagious. According to Hoyle, regularly sipping water helps wash protective capsules which contain virus down to our stomach where the whole thing can be digested.

In *Jiangmhăị* my sister who is a neurologist suggests that I have my tooth looked at by Nirmol. The latter takes away parts of both the inlay and the tooth and put in some composite bonding. This makes the first molar lower, so that now the premolars have to bear the weight when I put my teeth together. This probably is not a good thing for them. Moreover the removal of the parts of the tooth bordering the inlay to replace them with composite may prove later to make the seal weaker and leads to later leakages. As some may say, with dentists the case usually is 'Out from a pot into a frying pan'.

There are two kinds of dentist, namely conservative one and the other kind which is the opposite of it. The former is generally the case in England whereas the latter in America. New Zealand follows England's case while Daiï does America's. But younger dentists everywhere including those in Daiï and New Zealand follow the nonconservative way.

A conservative dentist tries to do the least to your teeth, only things that

are necessary. But a nonconservative dentist attacks a problem, which is sometimes imagined, head-on. For example, if he find a dimple in your tooth however not yet sensitive he would foretell that one day there will be caries there, and for that imagined decay would remove much of the surrounding parts of the tooth and fill the pit resulted with some alien material.

At Cuĺạ I complain to Mlivalẏa who takes me to Vạsnạ to whom I relate the same thing again and again one more time to Vidyạ when he joins us. The latter two have studied at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. Both are in the management of the dental college. The insurance system the English use for their health services seems to be no good. But their research works are excellent.

The first antibiotic was discovered in England, but the English physicians use antibiotics but cautiously, which in many ways is a wise thing to do. By contrast Daiï people are literally fed the strongest antibiotics available by their doctor.

All my teeth have been ruined by the Tetracycline copiously given by Pradhạn to whom my mother says she always took me while I was very young. But the memory of my early life seems to be have been blotted out by some mechanism or others, so that I can remember nothing. Experiences have taught me that a conservative doctor is usually far better than one who is too keen on doing things to you.

Because there are these devilish people about in the health profession, decent doctor and dentists hate them no less than their poor patients do for the very reason that a single fish rotten rots the whole basketful of fish. Codes of conduct in your profession asides, when shall a heathen know compassion? They perhaps know not what they do, but still *procul, O procul este, profani.*

Under the trademark name of Kittix I publish in March 2003 the book *Percolation within percolation and Voronoi Tessellation*, in April 2003 *Thai grammar, poetry and dictionary* and *A Lạ̄nnạ in town*, and in May 2003 *A Kiwi Lạ̄nnạ* and *A British Lạ̄nnạ*. People think that I am crazy, for I risk being plagiarised publishing books I write this way. But what else can I do, since I want to write and teach.

As a sword teacher I do not want money from my students. So if you borrow my works nobly, that is absolutely fine with me. *Plagiarism* means only if you not borrow but *steal* someone else's works. This means that, for instance, you pass my work as yours and give me no credits due.

If you did this, then I pity you because you lack the tiniest imagination. But having read my books, to me you are still my students and I wish you all the best. What you badly need is God. If you are a Buddhist, you do not have to switch to Christianity. The sayings of Buddha and Jesus are exactly the same.

Try reading the Bible, both testaments if possible. Like all great works you

need to read it more than once before it percolates and you understand it. I can safely say that I understand it now. *Safely*, because there can be more than one interpretations, but at least the one I have arrived at through Me is based upon a strong foundation, the strongest one of course to me at present. Never plagiarise! but nobly borrow and multiply!

There is a myth which says that Buddhism is the only ancient belief that stands up to reason. But in fact Buddhism only differs from religions that have a god in that it does not try to explain the problem of the Origin. If it did, then its Truth would have become the God.

All the time we look down upon our ancestors and see them in the light of our technology. But evolution is never that quick, and the thousands of years which separates us from them could mean no such great differences between them and us. On the other hand, the brains of the present generation are all cluttered with knowledges and information, which could imply a reduced efficiency. But still we look on them with such contempt whose languages were so grammatically complicated that they elude us.

There is either one god or none. Even in cases of religions where there are more, there is usually one among them which is the creator of all the others. In view of the Origin, we are all a part of the God which pervades all of us. The microwave background radiation, that remnant of the Big Bang, permeates the whole universe.

Whoever believes this knows that, no matter how tiny he may be, his is the direct access to God. And we are talking about *everything* here, so our soul is also a part of this God.

In Bhagavad Gītā, for instance, the Lord says †, 'The unreal hath no being; the real never ceaseth to be ; the truth about both hath been perceived by the seers of the essence of things'. The *real* here is not our physical bodies but whatever underlies all our atoms and retains their, necessarily non physical, property both in the everyday life and at the Singularity.

Arajuna (in Daiï Ạurjun) does not want to fight his enemies. He says, 'For I desire not victory, O Krishna, nor kingdom, nor pleasures; what is kingdom to us, O Govind, what enjoyment, or even life?'

But Kṛiṣna replied that men are a part of the Whole, and therefore are indestructible. Even if we consider death, it is inevitable and we should never grieve over it. Instead we should dwell alone in the Pure Reason. The concept of god is arrived at by a similar manner to that by which a mathematician arrives at his definitions. This explains why societies which have a god value mathematicians higher than those that have none.

Kṛiṣna tells us that action is better than inaction, and that we should render all actions attractive, because, 'All actions are wrought by qualities of nature

† *cf* M W Burway. *Bhagvad Gita.* Asian Publication. 1981.

only. The self, deluded by egoism, thinketh "I am the doer"'.

If we accept him then he is a part of ourselves and what he says becomes what we ourselves say. Most people who read the *Bhagavad Gītā* say that it says that we should believe in Kṛiṣna. But all the latter says is essentially for one to believe and find refuge in 'Me'. If we agree with his words, then this *Me* is a part of us, for has he says, we 'cometh unto Me'. Neither does he seem to mind the usual interpretation that we should find refuge only in him as the Kṛiṣna that is separate from us, for he says, 'However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine, O Partha'. You believe, in other words, either the Me within or the Me without.

The usual interpretation of this work would have it that Kṛiṣna begins his teaching by philosophically reasoning with Arajuna, and then later instead of developing along the same line of reason switches to the superstition where the latter should blindly follow him everywhere. A more likely interpretation is that after having passed the test for his first lesson of detachment, what Arajuna needs next is to break away from the illusion of the Kṛiṣna as something outside himself. It may be true that He is out there too, since he is everything, but He is also here within yourself, and you can reach Him by a primary link without aids of secondary ones.

> Know Me, O Partha, as the eternal seed of all beings. I am the Reason of the Reason, endowed, the splendour of splendid things am I. And I the strength of the strong, devoid of desire and passion. In beings I am desire not contrary to duty, O Lord of the Bharatas. The natures that are harmonious, active, slothful, these know as from Me; not I in them, but they in Me. All this world, deluded by these natures made by the three qualities, knoweth not Me, above these, imperishable. This divine illusion of Mine, caused by the qualities, is hard to pierce; they who come to Me, they cross over this illusion.

It is extraordinary, don't you think, that all the galaxies of the universe are one. Knowing this it makes all our differences and wars seem a mere storm in a teacup, and even this metaphor seems already too big!

There is a myth which says that in Asia families are bigger than those in the EU. How big a family has should be to be enough, and how large the home needed? The Ḅaṇgkauk of Rama I and II as indicated by the Lhaud́ Canal tripled to become Rama III's Ḅaṇgkauk with the Ǫ̆ng-ą̆ng (Ǫ̆ng Ą̆ng) Canal, before it sextupled with the Phd́ung Krungkṣẹm Canal to become Rama IV's city. But the family of God includes everything, and has the universe as its home. By definition it is not possible to run out of room there.

Sunday 4th May 2003, we have a long breakfast. Ben leads the conversation on what games we could play at the table. His is the game which starts from

three players where P asks Q what R would do in a certain situation. The situation gets more complicated when the number of players increase, P now asks S why Q answer that way.

Roxana starts off in a simpler version by asking each one of us in turn whether Ben would rather never had one of his favourite piece of furniture, or have had it for some time and then lose it. Except for Dawn who thinks that Ben would choose the first choice, most of us think that he would choose the second one, to which Ben agrees. This question is a profound one. For if you choose never to have it in the first place, then applying the same reasoning to life you would rather yourself never have born.

Kau (island) Kreḱ is an island in the middle of the *Càobrayạ* River just off the *ambhọe* (district) Pạkkreḱ in *cangvhaḱ* (province) Nondḅuṛi. Here there are kilns making earthenware and the *rạmañ* (Burmese) temple, Prmaïyikạ-vạs, repaired in 1874, is more than 200 years old. The temple is known in Daïï as *vaḱ* (temple) Pạk ĂÖ. The pier to cross over on a ferry to this temple is not the main pier at Pạkkreḱ but a short walk to the left of it. We walk through the Snạmnhụa temple, turn right once and then left. The ferry costs 2 *ḅạd*s. The river we cross here is the Laḱkreḱ river, which is in fact a by-pass canal. The *Càobrayạ* River goes a long way around the island.

A circuit walk covers 1/3 of the island, and that is about all there is. You can never get lost here unless you try. The path takes you through this Burmese village, and could take one or two hours depending on how often you stop along the way.

Thus within God is Christ within which is Me. You may draw a circle representing C inside the G, and like wise another M inside the C, and call these combination GCM or the other way round.

It is interesting, in particular to me, how the acronym TNK of Judaism is the Torah (Pentateuch), Nebi'im (Prophets), and Ketubim (Writings).

—

Lector benevole. – Victi vicimus.

—

Omnia, labor, vincit

—

Resurgamus.

—

Uberrima fides.

—

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Education

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